



**Assist. Prof. Dr.Kareem F.Aziz**  
**PhD in Community Health Nursing**  
**Lecture 4**

### **History of the Nursing Code of Ethics**

The nursing code of ethics is suggested to have been founded in 1893 and named the “Nightingale Pledge” or document after Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing. the Nightingale Pledge has been read by nursing students at graduations ceremony with little changes since inception. The formal code of ethics was developed in the 1950s by the American Nurses Association (ANA) and has undergone numerous modifications since. The most significant recent change was in 2015 when 9 interpretative statements or provisions were added to the code of ethics to help guide nursing practice in a more definitive way today in most of hospitals or health agency..

.....

### **Principles of Ethics for Nurses**

#### **1. Autonomy**

Autonomy is recognizing each individual patient's right to self-determination and decision-making. As patient advocates, nurses ensure that patients receive all medical information, education, and options in order to choose the option that is best for them. This includes all potential risks, benefits, and complications to make well-informed decisions. Once the patient has all relevant information, the medical and nursing team can make a plan of care in compliance with the medical wishes of the patient.

It is important that nurses support the patient in their medical wishes and ensure that the medical team is remembering those wishes. Sometimes, nurses will need to continue to advocate for a patient despite the wishes being verbalized because the medical team might not agree in those wishes. Many factors may influence a patient's acceptance or refusal of medical treatment, such as culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, general health, and social support system.

## **2. Beneficence (benefit)**

Beneficence is acting for the good and welfare of others and including such attributes as kindness and charity. The American Nurses Association defines this as "actions guided by compassion." Or kindness

## **3. Justice**

Justice is that there should be an element of fairness in all medical and nursing decisions and care. Nurses must care for all patients with the same level of fairness despite the individual's financial abilities, race, religion, gender, and/or sexual orientation.

## **4. Nonmaleficence not harm the patient//**

Nonmaleficence is to do no harm. This is the most well-known of the main principles of nursing ethics. More specifically, it is selecting interventions and care that will cause the least amount of harm to achieve a beneficial outcome. The principle of nonmaleficence ensures the safety of the patient and community in all care delivery

#### **References:**

1. Morrell TJ, Konda S, Grant-Kels JM. Response to a letter to the editor regarding "The ethical issue of cherry picking patients". *J Am Acad Dermatol*. 2019 May;80(5):e127. - [PubMed](#)
2. Suen KK. Ethical implications of population ageing in the intensive care unit. *Ir J Med Sci*. 2019 May;188(2):699-702. - [PubMed](#)