

Ethics and Professionalism



Course Objectives



- Articulate personal responsibilities in ethical decision making
- Identify personal and professional values and beliefs
- Define the cornerstones of ethics

Food for thought



Ask yourself the following questions:

- In the last two years, have I observed another provider deliver what I believe to be improper clinical care?
- In the last two years, have I observed your organization provide what I consider to be poor customer service?
- In the last two years, have I treated my patients the way I would expect my family to be treated?

Understanding Ethics



- **Ethics** are established through a system of principles, morals, and values from the perspectives noted below.
- A basic understanding of each part of the system is important to the exercise of ethical advocacy as an individual provider.
- Multiple perspectives need to be considered:
 - **Personal**- your point of view about a particular subject or topic
 - **Organizational/Professional**- the way that an organization defines the roles and the personnel that are needed and responsible for given processes within the body of the organization.
 - **Community**- is tailored for **community** and advocacy groups and officers in **community** services.

Understanding Ethics: Principles



- Principles are defined as fundamental truths that are permanent, unchanging, and universal in nature.
- Examples of principles:
 - **Dependability**- quality of being trustworthy and reliable
 - **Reliability**- the quality of being trustworthy or of performing consistently well
 - **Loyalty**- a strong feeling of support or allegiance



Understanding Ethics: Morals



- Morals are defined as what a person believes to be right or wrong.
- Examples of Morals: (since morals tend to be driven by personal beliefs and values, these are some common morals)
 - Always tell the truth
 - Do not destroy property
 - Keep your promises
 - Do not cheat
 - Treat others the way you want to be treated.
 - Do not judge
 - Do not steal



Food for Thought



You and a partner are on scene with a deceased person. You have followed your local protocol and are waiting on the coroner to arrive. The patient has several bottles of medications on their nightstand. One of the medications is the same as one you are prescribed.

How do ethical principles effect this scenario?

How do your morals play into this scenario?

Food for Thought



You are dealing with a local unsheltered (homeless) man, who frequents the emergency department to receive pain medications.

How do ethical principles factor in to how you treat this patient?

How do moral principles effect how you treat his patient?

Food for Thought



- Ethical Principles would drive you to treat this patient with the same respect as any other patient.
- Moral Principles would lead you to treat this patient how you would like to be treated in this situation.



Integrity-the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.

Honesty-the quality of being honest.

Fidelity-faithfulness to a person, cause, or belief, demonstrated by continuing loyalty and support.

Responsibility-the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something

Food for Thought



In the two scenarios, how do ethical values play a part in ethical treatment?

Ethical Values would lead you to treat everyone as though they are worthy of your best and fair treatment.

Personal Ethics



- The basic principles and values that govern interactions among individuals.
- Sound personal ethics are typically those that positively impact the experience of others when used to govern an individual's social or business-related behavior, at the very least, such ethics should not have a negative impact on others.

Example:

The personal ethics of the provider is outstanding. He has proven himself time and time again.

Ethical Considerations



- Training emphasis must highlight the importance of an individual's responsibility to make appropriate, honest, and ethical decisions, otherwise ethical dilemmas may be determined by social or office norms instead of an individual's ethical considerations.
- An individual's principles, morals, and values are the cornerstone for these considerations.

Application of Ethics to EMS



- Ethical consideration must be applied to every aspect of EMS from the 911 call and how it is dispatched to how we interact with the patient in their time of need.
- How we treat our patient's medically follows a standard of care that we learn in school. How we treat our patient's and others ethically should follow a system of principles, morals, and values.

EMT Oath



Be it pledged as an Emergency Medical Technician, I will honor the physical and judicial laws of God and man. I will follow that regimen which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of patients and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous, nor shall I suggest any such counsel. Into whatever homes I enter, I will go into them for the benefit of only the sick and injured, never revealing what I see or hear in the lives of men unless required by law.

I shall also share my medical knowledge with those who may benefit from what I have learned. I will serve unselfishly and continuously in order to help make a better world for all mankind.

While I continue to keep this oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life, and the practice of the art, respected by all men, in all times. Should I trespass or violate this oath, may the reverse be my lot.

So help me God.