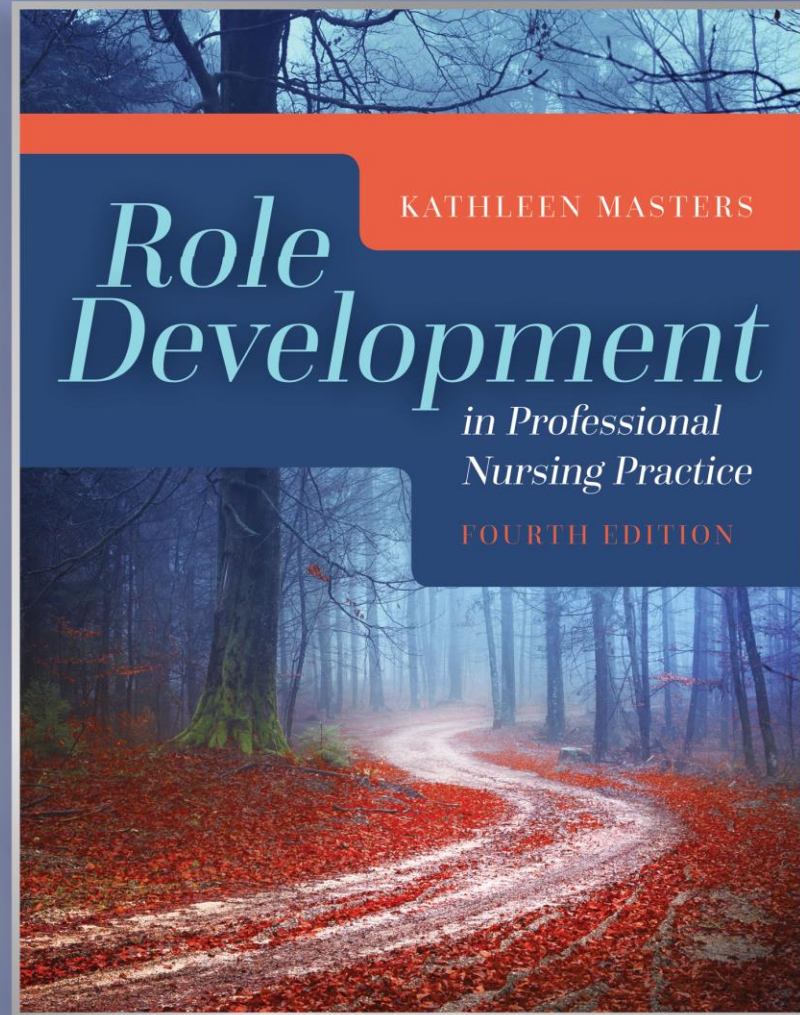


Chapter 4

Foundations of Ethical Nursing Practice



Ethics

- Ethics versus morals
- Bioethics
- Nursing ethics
- Moral reasoning
 - Kohlberg
 - Gilligan

Values in Nursing

- Values emphasized in the *Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2001)
 - Wholeness of character
 - Integrity
 - Basic dignity
 - Personal dignity

Ethical Theories and Approaches

- Virtue ethics
- Natural law theory
- Deontology
- Utilitarianism
- Ethics of care
- Ethical principlism

Ethical Principlism

- Autonomy
- Beneficence
- Nonmaleficence
- Justice

Professional Ethics and Codes

- *The Nightingale Pledge (1893)*
- *Nursing Ethics: For Hospital and Private Use (1900)*
- *ICN's Code of Ethics for Nurses (1953)*
- *ANA's Code of Ethics for Nurses (1950)*

ANA's *Code of Ethics for Nurses*

- Nine provisions with interpretive statements containing specific guidelines for clinical practice, education, research, and administration
- The code is considered to be nonnegotiable in regard to nursing practice

Examples of Themes in the *Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements*

- Respect for autonomy
- Relationships
- Patients' interests
- Collaboration
- Privacy
- Competent practice
- Accountability and delegation
- Self-preservation
- Environment and moral obligation
- Contributions to the nursing profession
- Human rights
- Articulation of professional codes by organizations

The ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses

- Nurses have 4 fundamental responsibilities:
 - To promote health
 - To prevent illness
 - To restore health
 - To alleviate suffering

Common Themes of ANA & ICN Codes

- Focus on the importance of nurses delivering compassionate patient care aimed at alleviating suffering; patient is the central focus of nurses' work
- Applies to all nurses in all settings and roles; nonnegotiable ethical nursing standards with a focus on social values, people, relationships, and professional ideals
- Share values of respect, privacy, equality, and advocacy
- Both codes illustrate idea of nurses' moral self-respect

Ethical Analysis and Decision Making in Nursing

- Ethical dilemmas and conflicts
- Moral suffering
- Team approach
- Case-based approach using 4 topics method
 - Medical indications
 - Patient preferences
 - Quality of life
 - Contextual features

Medical Indications

- What is the patient's medical problem? History? Diagnosis? Prognosis?
- Is the problem acute? Chronic? Critical? Emergent? Reversible?
- What are the goals of treatment?
- What are the probabilities of success?
- What are the plans in case of therapeutic failure?
- In sum, how can this patient be benefited by medical and nursing care, and how can harm be avoided?

Patient Preferences

- Is the patient mentally capable and legally competent? Is there evidence of incapacity?
- If competent, what is the patient stating about preferences for treatment?
- Has the patient been informed of benefits and risks, understood this information, and given consent?
- If incapacitated, who is the appropriate surrogate? Is the surrogate using appropriate standards for decision making?
- Has the patient expressed prior preferences?
- Is the patient unwilling or unable to cooperate with medical treatment? If so, why?

Quality of Life

- What are the prospects, with or without treatment, for a return to normal life?
- What physical, mental, and social deficits is the patient likely to experience if treatment succeeds?
- Are there biases that might prejudice the provider's evaluation of the patient's quality of life?
- Is the patient's present or future condition such that his or her continued life might be judged undesirable?
- Is there any plan and rationale to forgo treatment?
- Are there plans for comfort and palliative care?

Contextual Features (1 of 2)

- Are there family issues that might influence treatment decisions?
- Are there provider (physicians and nurses) issues that might influence treatment decisions?
- Are there financial and economic factors?
- Are there religious and cultural factors?

Contextual Features (2 of 2)

- Are there limits on confidentiality?
- Are there problems of allocations or resources?
- How does the law affect treatment decisions?
- Is clinical research or teaching involved?
- Is there any conflict of interest on the part of the providers or the institution?