Specialized Knowledge Area Module VI
Ethical Issues and Delivery of Health Care

Introduction

The rapid and dramatic changes in health care delivery systems have had an enormous impact on health care professionals and consumers. Longer life spans, improved quality of life, and technological advances, all combined with an increasingly diverse population, have created a new environment for health services delivery. The transformation from an industrial to a service and information-driven society has resulted in a renewed interest in ethics within the health and human services professions. Rationing, exercise of power, paternalism, interdisciplinary decision-making, distribution of goods and services, and public versus private domains are issues that demand the exercise of social responsibility. Ethical competence, moral leadership, integrity, advocacy for patients/clients, families, and the public call for ethical concepts to frame the understanding of such issues.

Ethics is not unique to health and human services practitioners; evaluation of actions of self and others are elements of standard professional practice. A just system of health care, concepts of holistic health and wellness, quality of life, trust in professional relationships, clinical competence, organizational ethics, and the rights of individuals and society have traditionally been examined according to ethical concepts.

Ethics in health and human services has an inherent interdisciplinary character. No single discipline holds the answer to the issues raised in an environment of constant change. Health and human behavior practice is increasingly interdisciplinary. Disciplines and professions are challenged to collaborate, pooling resources and skills to critically analyze social, political, economic, and value issues faced by all those who provide health services. Controversial or experimental procedures, policies, and applications require thoughtful evaluation and the application of ethical models. Courses of action will be determined by health and human behavior practitioners who recognize and attest to core principles of ethical reasoning and decision making.

This KAM is designed to help you expand and demonstrate your knowledge of theory, methods, and practice in the area of ethical issues and the delivery of health care. You will need to demonstrate an interdisciplinary approach to ethical practice based on ethical theories, concepts, and principles essential to critical thinking in the delivery of health services.
Overall Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this KAM, you will have a broad understanding of the theoretical and conceptual foundations of ethical decision making and practice within the context of health care delivery. This is demonstrated in your breadth component. You will have a research-based understanding of ethical issues related to a theory, concept, issue, or perspective in greater detail than you did in the breadth component. This is demonstrated in the depth component. Finally, you will demonstrate your ability to apply contemporary theory and research to one or more selected ethical issues in your professional practice in the application component. Integration of theory and research epitomizes the Walden concept of the scholar-practitioner.

All three components of the KAM must be linked. A KAM is like a book with several chapters. Select a topic and explore it theoretically in the Breadth, develop it in the Depth component by examining research that has been conducted on it, and apply the theory and research in the Application component by translating your learning into practice. The Depth serves as the bridge that provides the connection between the Breadth and Application, linking the two to create an integrated work of scholarship.

The study of ethics includes the following:

1. Major ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, justice, nonmalificence, fidelity, veracity, and confidentiality
2. Ethical theories such as utilitarian, Kantian, emotivist, and consequentialist
3. Morality
4. Law and legal rights

Breadth Component:
Health Services Delivery and Ethical Implications

Learning Objectives

The Breadth component is an analysis of contemporary and future issues in the field of health and human behavior and their implications as viewed from the perspective of various ethical paradigms. Your Breadth component should be an exploration of major ethical theories, concepts, and principles and their sources or authors. Upon completion of this section, you will be able to identify and define ethical issues pertinent to contemporary health care delivery; select and critically analyze (compare, contrast, synthesize, integrate and evaluate) classical and contemporary ethical theories; and demonstrate breadth of knowledge by writing a theory-based scholarly paper.
Learning Resources and Bibliographic Guidelines

The references listed represent only a sampling of the literature available in the field of ethics. Selected references should address contemporary and classical ethical models. In consultation with your KAM assessor, compile your own bibliography, which may include the following suggested references for demonstrating competency in the Breadth section. Select a minimum of five texts and at least one contemporary refereed journal article you will read to demonstrate competency in ethical theories, concepts, and principles. Subject Headings are provided in Appendix B, and listings of referred journals are found in Appendix F. Other information regarding location of resources is provided in Appendix C.


Demonstration of Competence

Write a scholarly paper of at least 25-30 pages that demonstrates in-depth comprehension of classical and contemporary ethical theories. The paper must demonstrate analytical thinking and writing through comparison, contrast, evaluation and synthesis of different theories, concepts, and principles.
Depth Component: Health Services Delivery and Ethical Decision Making

Learning Objectives

This Depth component is an examination of a selected issue in health and human behavior from the perspective of various ethical decision-making models. Upon completion of this section, you will be able to critique a health and human behavior issue within an ethical framework; utilize theories, concepts, and principles examined in the breadth component; and summarize and analyze current research on the selected health and human behavior issue.

Bibliographic Guidelines and Learning Resources

Select books and articles from refereed journals within your area of interest. Current research publications are the basis of the annotated bibliography you will develop to demonstrate your comprehension of issues in health and human behavior. Your readings will demonstrate an interdisciplinary approach to the health and human behavior issue you have selected as a significant concern in your area of practice.

Select a minimum of 15 refereed journal articles, published within the last 3 years, and at least five books you will read to demonstrate competency in understanding a selected issue in health and human behavior integrating ethical models and current research. The following references are only suggestions; select additional references in consultation with your faculty assessor.


**Demonstration of Competence**

Complete both of the following:

1. Compile an annotated bibliography of sources pertinent to your area and selected issues in health and human behavior. This bibliography must consist of a summary and critical analysis of a minimum of 15 articles from recent (within the past three years) refereed scholarly/professional journals. Potential journals are found in Appendix F.

2. Write a scholarly paper of at least 25-30 pages that demonstrates in-depth, research-based examination of a selected issue in health and human behavior from the perspective of ethical decision-making models. The paper must demonstrate analytical thinking and writing through comparison, contrast, evaluation and integration of research-based knowledge. Suggested issues are found in Appendix D.

**Application Component:**

**Ethical Theories Applied to Health Services**

**Learning Objectives**

This component is an application of theory and research-based ethical models to the area of health and human behavior. Upon completion of this KAM, you will be able to 1) apply an ethical model to an issue, problem, or situation in your practice setting, and 2) integrate ethical theories and current research into professional practice.
Learning Resources and Bibliographic Guidelines

Select at least five references in consultation with your faculty assessor. These are directly pertinent to your application project.

Demonstration of Competence

Choose one of the following

1. Submit a major work that you have previously completed that demonstrates your mastery of application of theory and research-based ethical models to health and human behavior (e.g., master's thesis, curriculum design, professional project, or health services grant that you have submitted for funding). Then, submit a 7-10 page critical analysis demonstrating your acquisition of new knowledge through this KAM.

2. Individualized project option. You may choose to design and implement an individual project. Your individual assignment must (a) demonstrate a command of the literature of the KAM, (b) demonstrate the application of theory and research-based ethical models to health and human services, and (c) be equivalent in scope and rigor to a final project in a 4-credit doctoral seminar.

Some examples of possible projects are outlined in Appendix E, but you are free to develop your own in consultation with your faculty assessor. Regardless of the medium or media that you choose to document this application component, at least some portion must be in writing. The ideas and issues you will examine are unlimited but must be consistent with health and human behavioral practice.
Appendix A:  
Criteria for Assessment

Assessment of your competence in this particular knowledge area will encompass three different modes—breadth, depth, and application—based upon demonstrated competence in a specific area in community health. You will be evaluated on the quality of your demonstration of the critical issues (breadth), your presentation of the research supporting the critical issues (depth), and the usefulness of this knowledge to your profession (application). Individual wants and needs, and the expectations of your faculty assessor, will determine the specific nature of your readings and assignments. While we have suggested general assignments for each section of the KAM, we encourage developing a unique approach. In all cases, the project chosen must be the equivalent of a final project in a five-credit doctoral seminar (four credits for the application component).

In addition, written work should be structured in a format acceptable to refereed journals. Although not required, consider developing your application project with a publication or presentation in mind. As your project will reflect a sufficiently high degree of originality, rigor, and quality anyway, a publication or presentation will greatly enhance your professional stature and credibility.

Walden requires documentation of your competence. Think about how you might provide this documentation. In all cases, you will support your work with adequate citations from the scholarly literature. If some of your work needs to be kept confidential, please be sure to clearly communicate this to your assessor. Assessors may require some form of independent evaluation of your work. In many instances, persons who provide an audience for your presentations may supply this evaluation, by colleagues, or clients.
Appendix B:
List of Subject Headings for Books Related to Contemporary Issues and the Ethical Delivery of Health Services

Subject Headings are indexing terms assigned to a book to identify the content/focus of the document. In some cases, adding a subheading narrows the focus.

If you are searching an online catalog, carefully study the onscreen helps. Sometimes a short definition will be offered; sometimes related search terms will be listed. In addition, you may consult the large four-volume book, Library of Congress Subject Headings, for both definitions and related terms.

The commands for a Subject search in IUCAT, Indiana University's online catalog are:

\[ \text{s subject heading} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{s subject heading--subheading} \]

For example:

\[ \text{s diffusion of innovation} \]
\[ \text{s diffusion of innovation--study and teaching} \]

Capitalization is not important, but it is essential to include the " -- " where indicated. The acceptable commands for other online catalogs may differ slightly. Consulting onscreen helps for such information is worthwhile.

Relevant Subject Headings and, where applicable, subheading are listed below. In many cases, the “guide” screen will also display subheadings for you to explore.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLIED ETHICS</th>
<th>MORALS</th>
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<td>MORAL THEOLOGY</td>
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<td>ETHICS</td>
<td>PHILOSOPHY--MORAL</td>
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<td>ETHICS--ORGANIZATIONAL</td>
<td>RIGHTS--MORAL AND LEGAL</td>
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<td>ETHICS--THEORIES</td>
<td>SOCIAL JUSTICE</td>
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<td>SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY</td>
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<td>MEDICAL ETHICS</td>
<td>VALUES</td>
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Appendix C: 
Index of Thesaurus Terms Suggested for 
Contemporary Issues and the Delivery of Health Services

The following database thesaurus terms for the Contemporary Issues and the Ethical Delivery of Health Services Knowledge Area Module are derived from Sociofile. Access to the Sociofile database is covered under the Internet License Agreement between Walden University and SilverPlatter Information Inc., 100 River Ridge Drive, Norwood, MA 02062.

ETHICS

CODES OF ETHICS use CODES OF CONDUCT
ETHICS
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
RESEARCH ETHICS

MORAL

MORAL use ETHICS
MORAL BEHAVIOR use MORALITY
MORAL JUDGEMENT
MORAL PHILOSOPHY use ETHICS
MORAL REASONING use MORAL JUDGEMENT
MORAL VALUES use MORALITY
MORAL/MORALS

PHILOSOPHY
SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY use PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES
SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY
Appendix D:  
Ideas for Depth Demonstration

1. Define a population (e.g., grouped by age, diagnosis, geographic area) and identify critical issues related to the management of their health care. Describe the issues and identify implications (including ethical).

2. Define a population and present current standards of health care delivery analyzing the roles and responsibilities (including ethical) of providers in different levels of the continuum of care. Demonstrate how each discipline contributes to the quality of health care.

3. Present and analyze a critical issue related to health care ethics (e.g., right to die, patients' rights, informed consent, choice of refusing treatment/against medical advise, hospice care/maintenance of dignity and freedom from pain while dying, prolonging life/death, transfusion dangers/autotransfusions, surrogate pregnancy/artificial insemination, protection from communicable diseases, gene manipulation, cloning). Analyze the impact and influence of social changes upon the outcomes of this ethical issue in the management of health care. Present current thinking of experts in health services about the issue you have selected and propose valid solutions to the problems you have identified.

4. People are more knowledgeable about their health care and are more involved in health care decision-making than ever before. Discuss the modifications that have been made in health care as a result of this trend. Analyze the problems (including ethical) resulting from this trend and propose valid solutions.

5. Select a group of people, and identify and describe the new frontiers in the diagnosis, assessment, treatment, and health care management of this group. Discuss the role of lifestyle in health status and demonstrate how various views may influence a health care professional's decision making. Lastly, discuss the ethical implications.

6. Analyze prospects of increased self-care and its implications (particularly the ethical implications).

7. Analyze the trends of illness across cultural groups. Discuss the trends toward more degenerative and chronic diseases and away from more acute diseases. Project future changes based upon currently available data. Relate these changes to health care ethics.

8. Discuss the boundaries between the practice of medicine and the expanded roles of other health care providers, and document how these differences and overlapping areas influence health services and ethical decision-making.
9. Discuss the issues and impact (including ethical) of an imposed health services constraint such as diagnostic related groups (DRGs), problem oriented records, peer review processes, etc. Analyze how it has changed health care delivery. Identify the trends for the future.

10. Address the predicted changes in numbers of physicians and nurses, and analyze the influences that these trends may have upon the decision-making roles of each of the health care provider groups. Discuss the outcomes for health care. Analyze the trends toward establishing private practices for health professionals of all disciplines, and relate these changes to the effects upon health care decision making, competition, and litigation. Describe the ethical issues and the safeguards within each profession to prevent providers from practicing outside their respective licensed powers.

11. Analyze (including from an ethical perspective) the current insurance crises and relate them to the effects upon the public's use of health care providers and the providers' health care management. Extrapolate from current trends to the future changes.

12. Demonstrate how new technologies (e.g., interactive video, mobile phones, world-wide satellite communications, computer technology) affect interdisciplinary planning. Analyze how ethical issues such as confidentiality of communications affect health services delivery when new technologies are used for communication.

13. Analyze societal, clinical, regulatory, reimbursement, and ethical issues related to limited resources and increased demand for health services (e.g., organ transplants, artificial parts, animal to human transplants). Analyze the influences of a growing elderly population upon health care decision-making. Describe the changes in health services as a result of this group's needs. Present alternative scenarios for the future of health services with a growing population of very old (> 85 years) people who do not have adequate resources to provide for their needs.

14. Analyze the growing trends of groups who do not have the resources to pay for health services (e.g., the homeless, the transient, the indigent). Discuss how diagnosis and health services may be provided to all. Identify ethical issues regarding access to health services and propose solutions to the problems. Describe the epidemiological issues and trends affecting these groups.

15. Describe the insurance and legal crises, and the influences of litigation upon the provision of obstetrical care. Extrapolate from current trends and project social changes in this area. Discuss ethical issues of teenage pregnancies and suggest alternative solutions for the current problems.

16. Identify ethical issues related to our substance addiction prone society and demonstrate the influence of these issues upon health care delivery.
17. Describe current health care provider roles, and document how and why they have changed over the past twenty years. Demonstrate how and why the shift toward cooperative, collaborative, communicative interdisciplinary planning for provision of health services has occurred. Illustrate current pitfalls (including ethical) and suggest potential solutions to inter-provider problems.

18. Analyze (including from an ethical perspective) current models for the delivery of health services within a specified population. Identify their strengths and weaknesses, and project models that may be more care effective and cost effective for the future. Analyze (including from an ethical perspective) the strengths and weaknesses of the futuristic models and propose possible solutions to the problems.

19. Identify and discuss current financial issues in the delivery of health services and analyze how they are being addressed in your community. Analyze (including from an ethical perspective) the impact of health care corporations upon the delivery of care.

20. Discuss quality of care issues. Analyze current health care provider distribution problems. Identify and present the issues, the causes of current mal-distribution, and several alternative solutions to the current problems. Discuss components of the alternative delivery systems. Note: Be sure to incorporate the ethical dimension.

21. Identify underserved populations by the current health services delivery systems. Analyze (including from an ethical perspective) the critical issues and problems. Suggest valid models to provide services to these groups. Discuss (including from an ethical perspective) the strengths and weaknesses of each model and propose a marketing strategy to have them accepted and adopted.

22. Analyze role overlaps and gaps in provision of services for each of the major disciplines of health care providers. Show where and how competition may be modified to cooperation. Discuss the role of organized disciplines of health care providers. Illustrate how professional organizations influence public health policy and the ethical delivery of health services.

23. Select one critical legal issue related to the delivery of public health care and trace its development. Demonstrate the influence (including ethical) the issue has had upon each of the types of providers and upon the population of receivers of the health care. Suggest solutions to the problems you analyze.
Appendix E:
Ideas for Application Demonstration

1. Describe and evaluate (particularly from an ethical perspective) current models for interdisciplinary health care. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of several different models and suggest solutions to current problems.

2. Videotape a course you are teaching that relates to interdisciplinary and ethical health services delivery models. Have your participants evaluate the effectiveness of your teaching.

3. Select a granting body (either federal, professional organization, or foundation) and write a grant proposing to provide a new interdisciplinary service for health care. Be sure to discuss the service’s ethical ramifications.

4. Develop a research project that compares the outcomes (particularly ethical) of various health care decision-making models (e.g., participative versus directive health care).

5. Lead a professional group in a discussion of critical ethical issues related to the allocation of health care resources and health care decision making. Submit a written summary and analysis of the activity, a videotape of the proceedings, and a summary of the class evaluations submitted by the participants.

6. Use videotape to role play and micro-teach ethical, alternative health care delivery scenarios in selected situations. Submit a written summary and analysis of the activity, the goals and objectives, and the outcomes. Submit the videotape(s) and a summary of the learner evaluations.

7. Write a scholarly paper on interdisciplinary and ethical health care delivery for submission to a selected, peer-review, health services journal.

8. Attend a professional conference and write an analytical report of the various topics presented. Demonstrate how these topics are important from an ethical perspective to you, your clients, and your profession.
Appendix F:
Selected Journals

American Journal of Human Genetics
American Journal of Public Health
Archives of Environmental Health
Community Mental Health Journal
Computers in Health Care
Ethics and Medicine
Families in Society
Fertility and Sterility
Healthcare Financial Review
Health Care Management Review
Home Health Care Services Quarterly
IRB: A Review of Human Subjects Research
Joint Commission Journal of Quality Improvement
Journal of Ambulatory Case Management
Journal of the American Geriatric Society
Journal of the American Medical Association
Journal of Health Care Management
Journal of Holistic Nursing
Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics
Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal
Managed Care Quarterly
New England Journal of Medicine
Occupational Medicine
The Hastings Center Report