

Introduction To Professional Nursing

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Introduction

Nursing is governed by a lot of factors. Laws, professional guidelines, and ethics are crucial to understanding the basic functionality of the registered nurse aspect. This research will be discussed on the basis of a case study on how these factors play a role in guiding the nursing practice. The major principles that guide them and the code of conduct that is being followed by the Australian Nursing Department will be depicted. It will also be highlighted what course of action should be followed that would be better for the patient as well as for the nursing staff.

Law, Ethics, And Professional Guidelines

Law and ethics are really important as they are the basis on which the nursing staff operates. It showcases the line that the nursing staff of Australia has to maintain while interacting with the patients. The rules and laws apply to all the nursing staff of Australia. The reason behind this is that a lot of issues relating to the nursing department have arisen in recent times. They have made the job of right and wrong very difficult. The [code of conduct and ethics](#) used would help the nursing staff to understand how all this contributes to the health care of the country (Birks, 2016). The various aspects of nursing, administratively, educationally, and clinically, are ruled by laws and ethics. It is very essential to have professional guidelines and ethics when it comes to nursing practice in Australia. The major values and characteristics in this aspect are:

- A better understanding of their responsibilities- Due to the involvement of professionals in the business, the nursing staff has a clear idea about their obligations and the way they can meet them. It lays down the dos and don'ts that they need to follow, removing any scope of confusion.
- Set as the base of what nursing is and what they do- The ethics and law define the basic jobs that nurses, irrespective of their position or location, should do to help them maintain uniformity in their tasks across the country.
- Any change in plan or policies- The ethical and professional guidelines help one to understand how everything is working, and if any change is required in the plans and policies with respect to the nursing department, then the same can be advocated with the help of these laws and professional guidelines.

The Key Principles That Guide Them

There is a set of major principles that are being followed with respect to the laws and the ethics and their relationship with nursing practice. They are:

- **Patient-focused services:** The prime principle that governs all the laws and guidelines is that the services should be such that they focus on the patient and their betterment. Therapeutic communication, cooperation, and collaboration would be very effective in helping to build a good relationship between the nurses and the patients (Westbury & Brown, 2016). The guidelines would instruct the staff on what should be the top priority, making it effective for the nursing staff to function.
- **Knowledge-based practice:** Another important principle is that all the practice done should be based on knowledge. The Australian nursing staff has experience which can be used when it comes to following the right laws and ethics. Care should be done by learning from the past, which will help nurses avoid committing mistakes (Hunt, 2015). Sharing required knowledge and health literacy with the patient can be really effective in creating strong professional relationships, leading to the growth of the nursing staff.
- **Professional behaviour:** Proper professional relationships should be maintained at all times with the patient. Any act that does not seem viable or is bound to break some ethics or law should either be avoided or tackled judiciously to avoid any conflict whatsoever. The entire act done by them should be taken with full responsibility, and they should be ready to bear any consequences related to it (Kangasniemi et al., 2015). A proper code of conduct should be followed, and professional and personal relations should be kept separated, maintaining strong control over them at all times.
- **Ethical Practice:** Ethics is a very crucial part of the Australian nursing staff. The key principles state that point. All matters related to client confidentiality and privacy should be respected and maintained in all cases. It also promotes the idea that all information should be maintained properly, leaving no gap for any mistake. Ethics also govern that the client is always the first priority, and all the important decisions regarding him should be made under proper supervision and guidance (Aliakbari. et al., 2015). All these would be really helpful in the smooth functioning of the nursing practice.

The NMBA Competency Standard, Codes Of Ethics, And Codes Of Practice For Registered Nurse

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) works under the law that is set by the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law of Australia. It states all the major aspects that govern the laws and rules regarding nursing and midwifery in Australia. The main aim of all this is to take proper care of the patients. A very important thing to keep in mind while preparing the codes of ethics and codes of practice is that the board reviewed much national and international literature to review what would

be suitable for them and hence prepared it accordingly (Terkamo-Moisio. et al., 2016). The major points of consideration are:

- The main aim of all this is to maintain a safe and proper code of conduct, which makes it easier for the patients and the public to know what to expect from the nurses.
- These would be really helpful in improving the administrative practices and policies that are being operated and maintained in the nursing department.
- The main principles and values of the NMBA and code of ethics are to work with the legal requirements and practices that are set out for them. A professional relationship should be maintained with the aim of delivering the best to the customers.
- An informed decision should be made with expert consultation, and any issue that seems to overcome the ethics should be properly discussed and considered before a solid decision is made.

Case Study

The case study highlights how an individual had a word with a nurse about committing suicide due to their medical issues suffered by him. This made the question of law and ethics very prominent in the nursing practice of Australia as the nurse was in a dilemma to choose between two ethically right options (Science Direct, 2016).

Immediate Actions

As a nurse, it was very difficult to choose whether to maintain the patient's confidentiality and remain silent about his desire to commit suicide or as a responsible medical practitioner to consult her superior and explain to them the opinion of the patient. When it comes to immediate action, the nurse should weigh both options under different lights. This is because both of them showcase two right ethical options where one would take precedence over the other. The nurse immediately decided to share their thoughts with other medical staff. This was necessary as they were facing an ethical dilemma (Atkins. et al., 2017). Of all the options available, this one was the most suitable. This is because if the patient commits suicide, then all the blame would be put on the nurse as, in spite of having an idea, no action was taken over it.

The ethical principle that applies to this case states that while making a decision, the good of the patient should be taken into consideration. This is the reason the immediate action involved informing the other staff members about the patient and his wish. It is the prime duty of the nurse, as per the code of ethics, to take positive action that is necessary for the well-being of the patient in all circumstances. It also states that maintaining the patient's safety is a top priority. That is why all the things should be done to maintain that in all situations. Another principle that can be applied to this case study and falls on the immediate action list is that a patient may sometimes make decisions that

would do them more harm than good (Edmonds, 2016). Therefore, it becomes the prime duty of the healthcare and nursing staff to make sure that steps are taken to prevent such action. Thus, informing the staff and having a word with the patient is crucial.

Subsequent Actions

The reason is that informing other medical people and doctors about the patient's thought process is a very important immediate action that can help the nurse guide the right step. After that, the nurse team followed their protocol with respect to self-harm and suicide and had a word with the patient with respect to his desire to commit suicide. It helped them to communicate with him about the reasons for this decision. This helped them understand his state of mind, and proper communication was maintained along with the nursing intervention, which helped in dealing with the situation in the right ethical way. The patient was then transferred to another unit of care, where he was kept under strict observation to make sure no sign of a suicide attempt or any other harm was shown to him. He was later discharged without any issue.

It was necessary to communicate with him and provide them with the correct psychological help. This is because it helped to clarify the issues that made him arrive at that decision. Another reason that the staff overridden the privacy issue is that the suicide attempt would have had a bad effect on the institute along with the family of the patient, who trusted the staff to make the best decision related to the health of the patient. All this made the staff make the patient understand that the pain suffered by him would reduce over time. They also contacted his family and daughter, whose lack of support was a prime reason for his desire to suicide. All these were done to improve the psychological condition of the patient and to help them recover from this mood of depression. The National Code of Conduct states that decisions should be made with the consent of the patient (Masters, 2015). However, if the decision taken by the patient harms him or anyone in any way, especially with the sign of any legal complication in the future, the nurse takes all the necessary action required for the betterment of the patient's life.

Possible Legal And Future Implications

As the matter was of life and death if the nurse had not taken immediate action to inform others that the patient would have committed suicide. This would have created a huge legal complication for the hospital. This is because, according to a code of ethics, keeping things secret in order to maintain autonomy can be described as a situation in which the nurse allowed the patient to die irrespective of being informed of his desire to die (Scanlon. et al., 2016). This also set a good solid base for the future of all the other staff at the workplace that if there is a question between two ethical dilemmas or to decide what to choose, make a choice that is most suitable for the life and betterment of the patient.

Conclusion

Laws and codes of ethics are the set boundary, making it easier for the nursing department to function. It helps them as a guiding force, stating the principle they should concentrate on while treating any patient. This was very helpful in the above case study as it helped in saving a life while still maintaining the proper nursing ethics. All this is done under the guidance of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia to take proper care of the patient and help the nursing staff by guiding them on the proper path that should be followed in terms of the rules and regulations expected by them.

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