Ethics: Application To Serving Persons In Homelessness.

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Principles of Bioethics
practice-based ethic

- Respect for Autonomy
- Nonmaleficence
- Beneficence
- Justice
- Fidelity

Will refer to the persons we serve in the shelters as “Clients”
Respect for Autonomy

- Self rule
- Right to privacy
- Right to informed consent
- Right being treated with dignity & respect.
- Client’s unique set of:
  - values
  - goals
  - desires
Autonomy

- Implies competence
- Legal age of decision making
- The ability to understand information and to relate this to one’s life plan and priorities
- Logical consistency with one’s goals
Problems related to incompetence

- Incompetence: legal definition
- Incapacity: a clinical definition
  - patient’s capacity may wax and wane
  - capacity for decision at this time?
- Creates a need for a surrogate (proxy)
  - payee
  - power of attorney
Nonmaleficence

- Do no harm
- Avoid harm
- Prevent harm
Beneficence
Doing good

- Act in such a way as to provide a benefit for the Client
- According to the ethical goals of caring
- In terms of the Client’s value system
Justice

- “Give to each that which is due.”
- According to:
  - merit
  - need
  - equally
  - potential for contribution
Fidelity

**Fidelity:** ethics of keeping one's promise.

Issue of TRUTH telling

- Confidentiality is a special form of **trust**
  within the principle of Fidelity.

- Consent form for information release
Ethical Principles

- Serve as practical moral guidelines for assessing one’s duty in a particular case.
- Provide continuity and uniformity in assessing policies in care giving.
- Helps to identify one’s moral duty in a particular situation.
- Guides us to do the right thing.
GENERAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES: for serving homeless Clients

Goal is individual empowerment through the creation of more positive choices.

A. Interactions will always be with:
   - dignity,
   - mutual respect,
   - courtesy, and
   - fairness.

B. Clients are not to be blamed for their situation.
Ethical Principles con’t

C. Clients are to be regarded as self-determined and their choices will be respected by workers. Providers will do their best to inform Clients of outcomes of those choices.

D. Workers & Client will strive to create additional alternatives when the given choices do not meet Clients' needs.
General ethical principles con’t

E. Right to privacy and confidentiality.

F. Right to decent housing, adequate food, clothing, and safe sanitary conditions.

G. Right to pursue an education.

H. Buildings will be accessible to persons with disabilities.

I. Individuals with special dietary needs should have their needs met.
Purpose of the Code:
A. The code provides a consistent standard of service for all workers serving homeless people. It is not intended to be a standard of conduct for the persons served.
B. The code provides a consistent gauge by which providers may refuse services to guests/clients.
C. The code applies to all service providers serving this population.

Code of Ethics:
1. Interactions will always be with:
   - dignity,
   - mutual respect,
   - courtesy, and
   - fairness.
2. Guests/clients are not to be blamed for their situation.
3. Guests are to be regarded as self-determined and their choices will be respected by workers.
4. Providers will do their best to inform guests of outcomes of those choices.
5. Workers & guest will strive to create additional alternatives when the given choices do not meet guests' needs.
6. Individuals have the inherent right to privacy and confidentiality.
7. Individuals have the inherent right to decent housing, adequate food, clothing, and safe sanitary conditions.
8. Buildings will be accessible to persons with disabilities.
Responsibility of the Case Manager is to ensure client rights and confidentiality of:

- Client Information
- Client records.
Appropriate Boundaries

1. It is the responsibility of the Case Manager to:
   a.) set appropriate boundaries with:
       i.) client,
       ii.) supervisor,
       iii.) referring agencies,
       iv.) funding streams.
Responsibility Boundaries con’t

2. It is the responsibility of the Case Manager to:
   a.) Educate the above mentioned persons about the boundaries. Example: time of appointments, cancellation policies and so on.
   b.) Enforce the boundaries consistently and fairly.

NOTE: Many employers educate staff on HIPPA guidelines and ask staff to sign a confidentiality form annually.
Ethics

Can we...?

Functional question

Should we...?

Ethics question
To treat or not to treat?

Staff/system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
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<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
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Client
A PARADIGM FOR THE ANALYSIS OF ETHICAL CASES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indications for Intervention</th>
<th>Preference of the Client</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of life</td>
<td>Contextual issues</td>
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- What are the problems? Prognosis? Is it acute, chronic, reversible?
- What are the goals of treatment and probabilities of success?
- What are the prospects, with or without intervention, for a return to normal life?
- Any biases that might prejudice the care giver’s evaluation of the Client’s quality of life?
- What preference for treatment has the Client expressed? Or refused?
- Does the Client understand the risks and benefits and has the Client give consent?
- Family issues that influenced the choice?
- Financial?
- Religious?

From: Jonsen, A., Siegels, M., Winslade, W. *Clinical Ethics*, 4TH edition
Ethical decision making

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Citizenship
- Caring

Pillars of character
Guides to decision making
1. Read:

“Ethical Issues of Assessment”

2. Write out in a paper and hand in to your professor the
   - legal and ethical implications of the actions suggested to you as the case manager.
   - how you think you would handle it and why.