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Medical Ethics Subject 1 Introduction

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Objectives

The main objectives of this lecture include:

1. Elaboration some aspect of the provision of good standard of care.
2. Explore the importance to adhere to ethical standards in health and medical care.

3. Explain the systems of human social behavior.

4. Explain the processes of primary and secondary socialization which affect the behavior of human.

Overview of medical ethics

➤ The global medical profession has maintained simple ethical standards for more than 4,000 years.

➤ For example, the Hippocratic Oath, the Bible, the Holy Koran, and the Islamic legacy, as well as cultures, traditions, and social morality have shaped and guided the development of ethical standards in the medical profession.

➤ Most of these historical documents focus on " avoiding harm to patients"

➤ "Ethics is the moral reasoning of actions."

➤ Morality refers to social norms that distinguish between right and wrong in human conduct

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❖ The relation between doctor and patient is considered fiduciary in nature and based on mutual trust which forms the foundation of medical ethics.

❖ However, the honors and ideals of medical profession imply responsibilities of physician extends beyond the individual to society.

❖ Public at large expects doctors to not only have high standard of medical ability and skill but also high ethical behaviors.

❖ Ethics is the branch of philosophy that defines:
- what is good for the individual and for society and

- establishes the nature of obligations, or duties, that people owe themselves and one another.

The statements of medical ethics require the physician to:

1. do what is best for the patient

2. place the patient's interests before the interests of the physician.

3. to protect and defend human dignity and patients' rights.

Medical ethics is not only about avoiding harm; rather, it is a set of norms, values and principles intended to govern medical ethical conduct.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Why is it important to adhere to ethical standards in health and medical care?

1. ethical standards promote the aim of medical care: to alleviate suffering and may minimize errors.

2. medical care is built on the communication between medical workers and patients and/or patients' families. Ethical standards promote the values that are essential to good communication, such as :

    A. trust
    B. accountability
    C. mutual respect and
    D. fair medical care

3. ethical standards will help to build public support for medical care if they trust the quality and integrity of these programs.

4. Health and medical care typically involve different medical workers from a variety of disciplines.

They need to work in healthy work environments that are characterized by trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness. Ethical standards may promote the values of cooperation and collaborative work.

5. Ethical standards in medical care
promote other important moral and social values
such as:
A.   social responsibility,
B.   human rights,
C.   patients' welfare (wellbeing),
D.   compliance with the law,
E.   Medical regulations, and
F.   patients' safety
Ethical standards can facilitate a pleasant environment for both patients and medical workers.

SYSTEMS GOVERNING HUMAN SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Human behavior is experienced throughout an individual's entire lifetime.
 It includes the way they act based on different factors such as:
1. Genetics, family
2. Social norms, values, good" or "bad"
3. Religion ,faith,
4. Attitude and personal preference
5. Law
6. Custom and tradition
7. Ethics

Behavior is varying from person to person and can produce different actions from each person.

Socialization:

The lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within his or her own society.

Socialization is thus 'the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained', including transmission of values, beliefs & attitudes.

It is either:
- **Primary Socialization .**
- **Secondary Socialization.**

Socialization Process

Primary Socialization:

■Is the process of socialization that takes place earlier in life during childhood .

■For a child is very important because it sets the groundwork for all future socialization.

■A child learns the attitudes, ethics, values, and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture.

■It is mainly influenced by the immediate family and friends.

■ The child absorb beliefs &values of parents (Significant others) .

Secondary Socialization :

■It refers to the process of learning what is the appropriate behavior as a member of a smaller group within the larger society.

■Secondary socialization takes place outside the home.

■ It is where children and adults learn how to act in a way that is appropriate for the situations they are in.

■ Is the process of internalization and absorption of values, ethics & beliefs later in life . e.g.: in school or work (generalized other) .

■Schools require very different behavior from the home, and children must act according to new rules.

■ New teachers have to act in a way that is different from pupils and learn the new rules from people around them.

■ Secondary Socialization is usually associated with teenagers and adults and involves smaller changes than those occurring in primary socialization.

■Such examples of Secondary Socialization are entering a new profession or relocating to a new environment or society

What is "Ethics"?

■ A system or code of morals that provides a guide for daily living:
  ▪Relates to right and wrong in daily living
  ▪Establishes principles for conduct

■ Simple honesty
  ▪Without it, life becomes a constant struggle of intrigue,
  ▪The same is true for ethics

Medical ethics,

❖Medical ethics refers to the system of values common to medical profession and application of these values to practice of medicine.

❖It is the standard of behavior by which physician evaluate their relationship with their patients , colleagues and society.

The practice of medicine is rooted in the *covenant* of *trust* among patients, physicians and society.

Patients are entitled to good standards of practice and care from their doctors.

Essential elements of this are :

+ professional competence,
+ expertise,
+ good relationships with patients and colleagues and
+ observance of professional ethical obligations."

Goals of medicine are:

■ Promote health ,i.e. health education

■ Prevent disease ,i. e. vaccination

■ Relieve symptoms

■ Treat or cure disease & prevent disability

■ Prevent untimely or unnecessary death

■ Improve function ,i.e. rehabilitation, physiotherapy

■ Educate and counsel patients about condition, prognosis and treatment benefits vs. risks
■ Avoid harm

Why Ethics Become Important?

➢ Nowadays, **conflicts** of interests between the government and medical institutions, between medical institutions and medical personnel, between physicians and patients are getting more and more serious and complex.

➢ **High technologies** not only brought us hopes of cure but have also created a heavy economic burden.

➢ The ethical **dilemmas of high technology medicine**-brain death, organ transplantation, and concerns about quality of life-have become increasingly prominent.

➢**A new and more specific code of ethics** must be developed to meet the demands of social development and medical service.

➢This new code integrates the traditional medical ethics with modern principles and values.
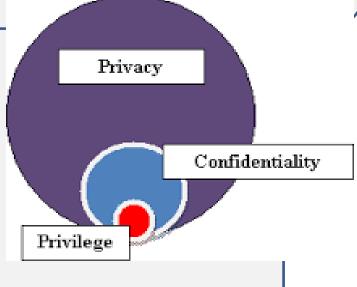
Aims of medical ethics

➕ To teach physicians to recognize the humanistic and ethical aspects of medical careers.

➕ To enable physicians to examine and affirm their own personal and professional moral commitments.

➕ To equip physicians with a foundation of philosophical, social and legal knowledge.

➕ To enable physicians to employ this knowledge to clinical reasoning.

➕ Equip young students and physicians of strong character with knowledge and skills required to practise good medical care.

➕ The overall aim is to increase awareness to the ethical issues to incorporate in clinical practice to help in clinical decision making.

Basic Rights and Ethical Duties

Human Rights

➢Access to health care

➢Right to non-discrimination

➢Right to privacy and confidentiality

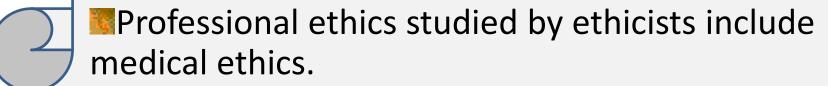➢Right to environment that is not harmful to health or well being

Professional ethics (PE):

PE are standards of conduct that apply to people who occupy a professional occupation or role.

A person who enters a profession acquires ethical obligations because society trusts them to provide valuable goods and services that cannot be provided unless their conduct conforms to certain standards.

Professional ethics: obligation of a profession
- self regulation
- education of self and others

Professional ethics studied by ethicists include medical ethics.

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR MEDICAL ETHICS?
• The practice of medicine and the practice of ethics are inseparable.

• Every clinical decision invokes an ethical decision as well.
• In many instances, the ethical issue may not be readily apparent.

• In other conflicts arise between ethical principles and medical decisions, which require the clinician to be well versed with the former in order to guide the latter

Bioethics

Bioethics is a way of understanding and examining on the moral aspects of biomedical research and health care .
Bioethics includes:
Bioethics could be defined as the study of ethical issues and decision-making associated with the use of living organisms

Ethical justification

"Ethics focuses on the reasons why an action is considered right or wrong.
It asks people to justify their positions and beliefs by wise opinion that can persuade others."

Clinical ethics

✷ **Clinical ethics** is a practical discipline that provides a structured approach for identifying ,analyzing, and resolving ethical issues in clinical medicine.

✷ Clinical medical ethics is a practical and applied discipline that aims to improve patient care and patient outcomes by focusing on reaching a right and good decision in individual cases.

✷ It focuses on the doctor-patient relationship and takes account of the ethical and legal issues that patients, doctors, and hospitals must address to reach good decisions for individual patients.

✷ Clinical ethics emphasizes that in practicing good clinical medicine, physicians must combine scientific and technical abilities with ethical concerns for the personal values of the patients who seek their help.

Thank You

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