**What is Ethics?**

1. ***Compare and contrast ethics and health care ethics***
   1. What is ethics?
      1. Ethics is a set of principles or rules that define how a person should appropriately conduct oneself in a given situation. The rules that steer ethics are those that are considered acceptable for a particular individual, group, or society. Oftentimes, ethics is considered ‘good behavior’ or a ‘code of conduct’.
   2. What is health care ethics?
      1. Health care ethics is a set of principles or rules that define how a person should appropriately conduct oneself in a situation involving health care. Oftentimes, health care ethics is used interchangeably with bioethics and medical ethics, but should be considered separate disciplines. Bioethics includes a wider range of agents including animals and the environment. Situations involving bioethics would include the proper use of animals in research and decisions on the continued production of gas-powered vehicles. Medical ethics focuses on clinical decisions that are made during the interaction between a physician and the patient. Health care ethics explores interactions among multiple entities within the health care system including health insurance, pharmaceuticals, administration, nurses, and other health professionals such as occupational and physical therapists.
   3. Why is there a need to study ethics?
      1. A variety of ethical issues will transpire for individuals employed in the health care field. Studying ethics provides professionals with the necessary skills to identify common ethical issues and possess appropriate tools to handle ethical situations prior to an exposure of an ethical dilemma. This will enable a health professional to be guided in the most ethical manners.
      2. Studying ethics, particular to one’s professional field, is necessary as principals that are used in one’s daily life, do not always resolve dilemmas because of the unique field of health care.
   4. What are common ethical situations in occupational therapy?
      1. Qualitative research has previously identified ethical situations themes commonly connected with the field of occupational therapy.
         1. What is the right and wrong way to handle patients that demonstrate dangerous behaviors?
         2. How do you adequately work with members of your team that are unprofessional and incompetent?
         3. What do you do when evaluating a patient’s discharge orders that may include difficulty instructions for the patient to follow?
         4. How do you deal with situations where you may have problems with insufficient resources to take care of your patients?
         5. How do you handle co-workers ignore privacy laws regarding patient information?
         6. How do you handle a lack of confidence from patients, physicians, and other health care providers who discount your professional opinions?
2. ***Explain the difference between morals, ethics, and law***
   1. Morals, Ethics, and Law
      1. Morals involve using a particular reason, versus a feeling or conventional views, to decide on a course of action in a given situation. Ethics are based on how a society does things. Laws are standards that are generally written which a person can receive criminal or tort actions for violations.
      2. Morality will overcome different cultures and will not change unless a person’s personal belief system changes. Oftentimes ethics will vary depending on the situation, while morals will remain constant. Laws require standardized processes dictated by a particular entity, such as the government, to be changed.
   2. How can a health care provider identify if the scenario is a moral, ethical, or law issue?
      1. Oftentimes it can be hard to distinguish between a legal, ethical, and a moral issue and all individuals should err on the side of the most right thing to do in regards to anything. But individuals should also be aware that some issues can have a combination of all avenues
      2. For example, a married man has an affair with his secretary with the stipulations that in order to keep her job she must continue the affair.
         1. Legal: This is an example of sexual harassment and is considered illegal by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
         2. Ethical: It is unethical to force an individual to choose between their job and a sexual relationship
         3. Morals: It is immoral to have an affair with a married man and immoral to have an affair with a man who is married.
      3. A lighter example is deciding to call into work sick, when you are not sick.
         1. Legal: There are no legal ramifications for calling into work sick, if done properly, but excess absences may result in termination of your job and in some states unemployment benefits will be revoked.
         2. Ethical: Deciding to call in sick requires that someone else has to perform your job while you are absent or patients may have their appointments cancelled.
         3. Moral: It is a lie stating you are sick when you are not sick and therefore, it is now immoral issue
      4. Best practices for handling a situation is to determine:
         1. If there are any laws that can be broken from an action = Law
         2. What does your moral compass guide you to do = Morals
         3. What are the general normal rules a society has for a particular situation = Ethics

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