

# Ethical Aspects in Medical Practice: Investigation of Ethical Dilemmas and Principles Related to Medical Practice

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## ABSTRACT

Medical ethics or medical deontology is a set of ethical norms and principles of behavior of medical workers in the performance of their professional duties, i.e. deontology provides mainly norms of relationships with the patient. In the medical understanding, deontology is the teaching of legal, professional and moral duties and rules of conduct of a medical worker in relation to a patient. In addition, deontology establishes norms of relationships between medical professionals and relatives of patients, as well as between colleagues in the medical team. The article is a study of ethical aspects related to medical practice. Doctors and other medical professionals face many ethical dilemmas that require making difficult decisions in their daily work. The purpose of this study is to analyze various ethical problems faced by medical professionals and identify the basic ethical principles that help them make decisions in these situations. A medical worker should always remember about the patient, have the ability to conquer and subdue the soul of the patient. The core issues of medical ethics and deontology are the relationship between a medical worker and a patient. The personality and appearance of a medical worker are determined by the economic, political and social conditions of the society in which he works. The paper discusses several ethical dilemmas faced by doctors, such as confidentiality and protection of patients' personal data, principles of fairness and accessibility of medical care, as well as ethical issues that arise when making decisions about consultations, consent to treatment and termination of a patient's life. It also examines the various ethical principles that medical personnel apply to solve these dilemmas, such as the principles of benevolence, non-harm, respect for patient autonomy and justice.

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## INTRODUCTION

Ethical aspects play an important role in medical practice and medical practice in general. Doctors and other medical professionals face various ethical dilemmas that require complex decisions that have a significant impact on patients and society as a whole. An understanding of ethical principles and their application in medical practice are necessary to ensure the best care for patients and maintain professional standards.

The purpose of this article is to study various ethical aspects related to medical practice and to identify the main dilemmas and principles faced by medical professionals. The paper examines ethical issues arising in various areas of medical practice, including confidentiality, fairness, consent to treatment and termination of a patient's life. It also highlights various ethical principles that help doctors make ethically informed decisions.

**KEYWORDS:**  
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Within the framework of this study, a review of the relevant literature was conducted, including ethical guidelines, empirical studies and professional standards. Interviews with experienced medical specialists were also organized to get their opinion and experience regarding ethical issues and principles in their practice. This allowed us to create a more complete picture of the existing ethical challenges and ways to solve them.

The issues of ethics and the choice of tactics of speech communication between a doctor and a patient are of no small importance. Each patient, from the point of view of communication, is unique in its own way: everyone needs their own individual approach, and compliance with ethical norms in the dialogue between the doctor and the patient can play a decisive role in his cure. Therefore, it is necessary to know the basics of medical ethics and the basic tactics of speech communication when communicating with a patient, which will improve the quality of interaction and the effectiveness of the treatment process.

The importance of studying ethical aspects in medical practice lies in the fact that these issues directly affect the quality of medical care, the relationship between doctors and patients, as well as public confidence in the medical profession.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The authors of the study conducted a literature review, as well as conducted interviews with medical specialists to get an idea of the various ethical problems and principles they face in their practice. The study highlights the importance of training medical personnel in ethical norms and principles, and also offers recommendations to increase awareness and ethical competence of doctors.

## RESULTS

The healthcare system of a modern state is an industry that consumes a significant amount of material, financial and human resources [1]. Recently, there has been a steady trend towards an increase in the costs of maintaining the health system at the proper level, which indicates the need for further redistribution of the volume of medical care between the pre-hospital stage and the resource-intensive inpatient unit, an increase in the share of preventive services in the overall structure of medical care provided. Any, even the most theoretically correct and correct model of the quality of medical care assessment will function optimally only with a real, and not hypothetical, interest in this by all subjects of the healthcare system. At the same time, in the conditions of public health, there is a cardinal unity of interests of patients and medical workers interested, first of all, in the positive outcome of medical intervention, the cure of diseases and health promotion. Since scientists currently offer quite a lot of criteria of justice, the principle of justice, like other principles of medical ethics, does not have absolute force. For a doctor (paramedic, midwife, nurse), the main criterion of fairness towards a patient is the patient's condition and his need for medical care [2].

The law is a mandatory norm with some lagging defects, and the legislative process is characterized by rigidity and a long cycle, and most often it can only be "retroactive" and cannot provide timely and effective protection measures. Therefore, ethics and morality become an effective complement to the legal system.

Medical ethics is a field of ethics that explores ethical issues and dilemmas related to medical practice. She researches the moral principles that guide the behavior of medical professionals and their interaction with patients and society. Medical ethics is aimed at determining the correct and morally justified behavior of doctors and other medical professionals.

One of the main features of medical ethics is respect for patient autonomy. This means that the patient has the right to make decisions about his treatment and taking care of his health. Doctors should respect and promote patient autonomy by providing informed consent and respecting their right to confidentiality. In the case of ethically informed consent, the expected medical or even non-medical benefits can reasonably influence a person's decision in choosing a procedure for changing the genitals. Such a choice, as a rule, is due to the value preferences of the subject. The mere prospect of health-related (preventive) sociocultural, religious, cosmetic or other supposed benefits usually cannot justify an involuntary violation of the integrity of the body of young people [3].

The ethical principle of "non-harming" requires that doctors do not cause unjust harm to patients and strive for their well-being. Doctors should take into account the benefits and potential risks for patients when making decisions about treatment and provision of medical care.

The principle of benevolence implies that doctors should act in the best interests of patients and strive for their well-being. They should provide high-quality medical care based on the best scientific knowledge and professional experience. The ethical principle of fairness requires equal distribution and accessibility of medical care. Doctors should ensure equal opportunities for all patients, regardless of their social status, race, gender or other factors.

Protecting patient privacy is an important aspect of medical ethics. Doctors are obliged to maintain the confidentiality of medical information about patients and not disclose it without the consent of the patient, except in cases stipulated by law or ethical standards.

Doctors have obligations to improve the health of patients and society as a whole. They should make efforts to prevent diseases, promote a healthy lifestyle and improve public health.

The Code of Ethical Conduct of a medic fits well into global standards concerning moral functioning within their competence. The analyzed values reflect standards rooted in the ancient principle of *primum non nocere*. Currently, the values that make up the axiological basis of medicine are care, professionalism, responsibility, fairness, professional honesty, respect for the dignity and autonomy of the patient/client. The analysis has shown that these values represent a dynamic system in which they constantly enter into relationships, interactions and dependencies. Consequently, these values can take on different meanings depending on the context in which they are implemented [4].

Every medical professional should make efforts to achieve the values contained in the Code of Ethics and regularly compare them with their knowledge and professional experience. Physicians should internalize these values and make them a guideline for their professional development. The process of internalizing values should begin already during training and continue throughout professional life. These values should enrich the work of medical specialists and make them think about their knowledge and professional competencies, while remaining just good people in the eyes of other people.

Medical ethics implies high professional competence and responsibility of medical workers. Doctors should have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide quality medical care and constantly improve their professional skills. In general, medical ethics focuses on achieving high standards of professional behavior and care.

Ethical medical dilemmas arise when making decisions that involve moral aspects and have a potential impact on patients, doctors and society as a whole. Let's consider several common ethical medical dilemmas and approaches to their analysis.

Healthcare professionals face a dilemma between the obligation to maintain patient confidentiality and the need to disclose information in certain situations, for example, when the lives of others are threatened or when it is required by law. The analysis of this dilemma includes an assessment of the benefits and potential harm, compliance with relevant legal and ethical standards, as well as compliance with the principle of respect for patient autonomy [5].

In conditions of limited resources, ethical dilemmas arise related to the distribution of medical services and treatment. Doctors should make decisions about priorities and allocation of resources based on the principles of fairness and promoting the well-being of the largest number of patients.

Also, ethical problems arise at the moment when the patient refuses the recommended treatment or asks for medical procedures that may contradict medical norms or principles. The analysis of this situation includes taking into account the patient's right to make autonomous decisions about his health, but also requires an assessment of the patient's understandability, voluntariness and awareness.

The decision to terminate a patient's life or perform euthanasia is one of the most difficult ethical medical problems. Here it is important to observe the patient's rights to an autonomous decision, assessment of suffering and quality of life, features of emotional and ethical support of the family, as well as compliance with legislative and ethical standards.

Traditionally, there has been an important distinction in medical ethics between realistic hopes of a patient or subject of research and unrealistic optimism. The latter state can also be expressed as "self-deception" or as "being in denial". Generally speaking, hope is considered a positive state that should be encouraged and which in no way hinders the patient's independent decision-making. In addition, the loss of all hope is complete despair or, perhaps, complete apathy, conditions that we want patients to avoid. Thus, in medicine and in general, we urge people to "never lose hope." Consider the following story about palliative care as one example of this traditional view [1]:

Hope, with its built-in orientation towards the future, is a central important part of every person's life. Without hope, we are unlikely to be able to form an intention to act or see the reasons for it. To take away a person's hope is to plunge him into despair and the accompanying paralysis of action. Thus, maintaining the patient's hope is an important element of any medical care. And if we take seriously the dictum, widely supported in palliative care, that "patients should live until they die," then supporting the patient's hope may seem like an important part of the palliative caregiver's activity [6].

Problematic aspects of medical ethics require analysis of the following issues.

1. Patient priority. The central aspect in medical ethics is the well-being and interests of the patient. Decisions and actions of

doctors should be aimed at the best satisfaction of the needs and interests of the patient.

2. Ethical principles. Doctors should be guided by basic ethical principles, such as respect for patient autonomy, non-harm, benevolence and justice. The analysis of dilemmas should be based on these principles and the search for a solution that best takes into account all these aspects.

3. Consultation and collegiality. In difficult ethical situations, doctors may need to consult with other colleagues, ethicists or ethics committees. Discussion and exchange of opinions with other experts will help to get different points of view and contribute to making a better decision.

4. Continuous learning and development. Since ethical dilemmas in medicine can be complex and diverse, it is important that doctors constantly improve their knowledge and skills in the field of medical ethics. Training and development in this area will help them better understand and analyze ethical dilemmas, as well as make informed decisions [7].

In general, the analysis of ethical medical dilemmas requires referring to the basic principles of ethics, taking into account the interests of the patient and discussing with other professionals. Decisions should be based on fairness, respect for patient autonomy, and a commitment to ensuring the best possible well-being for all affected parties.

Medical ethics and national priorities are closely connected, since ethical issues in medicine often reflect the social, cultural and political aspects of society. Let's consider some issues of medical ethics related to national priorities. Taking into account the limited resources of the medical system, the question arises as to how these resources should be distributed and which categories of patients should be prioritized. National priorities can be determined on the basis of various factors, such as social justice, economic efficiency and social needs.

National priorities may include striving to ensure access to medical care for all citizens, regardless of their social status, income or place of residence. This may require the development of policies and programs aimed at reducing inequality in access to healthcare [8].

National priorities may also include the development of biomedical science and health research. Defining ethical frameworks and regulatory mechanisms for biomedical research is an important issue related to national interests, patient safety and well-being.

These priorities should take into account cultural and religious differences in society. Issues related to ethics in the practice of medicine, for example, abortion, euthanasia or the use of genetic technologies, can cause controversy and require balancing between individual rights and collective values.

The role of national priorities in emergency situations, such as epidemics or pandemics, is very important in ethical health issues. In such situations, dilemmas arise related to the allocation of limited resources, treatment priorities and the balance between protecting society and respecting the rights of individual patients. National priorities can also determine the responsibilities and responsibilities of health workers. Doctors and other medical professionals should meet professional standards, regulate their practice and make efforts to provide quality medical care in accordance with national goals and priorities [9].

When analyzing ethical issues in this context, it is important to take into account the diversity and diversity of opinions and

values in society. This may require extensive discussions, including public participation and consultations with various stakeholders, in order to reach consensus and develop ethical guidelines and policies that reflect national interests and values.

## DISCUSSION

The development of artificial intelligence in medicine introduces new ethical aspects and challenges. Its use in medicine can lead to situations where autonomous artificial intelligence systems make decisions about the treatment of patients without the direct participation of doctors. Ethical questions arise about how to guarantee the safety and reliability of such systems, as well as who is responsible for their solutions.

Security issues of medical AI are risks and harms that arise in its practice, such as software errors, the impact of cybersecurity, the need for adequate testing, complex software certification, etc., covering various legal and ethical issues [10]. No technology is 100% safe. However, when talking about medical AI, the first thing that comes to mind is to ensure its safety, which is absolutely necessary, because the goal of medical AI should be dedicated to protecting and promoting human health. When medical AI fails, it can cause serious harm to people. Between 2000 and 2013, surgical robots in the United States were responsible for at least 1,391 incidents of harm and 144 deaths [11].

The use of artificial intelligence in medicine requires the processing and analysis of large volumes of medical data. It is important to protect patient privacy and prevent unauthorized access or misuse of this data. Ethical questions arise about patients' consent to the use of their data and how to ensure their anonymity and security.

Complex artificial intelligence algorithms can be difficult to understand and explain. Doctors and patients may feel insecure about decisions made by an intelligent AI system. This raises ethical questions about its transparency and explicability, especially in cases where decisions made with its help can have significant consequences for the patient's health.

The risks of medical AI are more related to algorithms. Firstly, the algorithmic black box makes the models incomprehensible and difficult to adjust. If the algorithm is imperfect or incorrect, the output will lead to even more errors, which is likely to cause diagnostic errors, harm people's health and even take their lives. In 2015, the British used a medical robot to perform a heart valve repair operation, and the robot not only made serious operational mistakes, but also prevented the proper work of human doctors, which led to the death of the patient [12]. It is impossible to develop a code that covers all the possibilities. Thus, security flaws in AI may endanger more patients than the possibility of a single incorrect diagnosis by a doctor, since automated systems will reproduce more errors.

If artificial intelligence systems are developed and trained on the basis of unrepresentative data, they may be subject to bias and lead to discrimination against certain groups of patients. This raises questions about fair access to health care and ensuring that an intelligent system does not exacerbate existing health inequalities.

The use of artificial intelligence in medicine requires the development of ethical algorithms and regulatory frameworks to ensure safety, reliability and compliance with ethical

principles. There are also risks associated with potentially autonomous AI application functions. For example, medical chatbots provide diagnostic and treatment recommendations to reduce the number of unnecessary visits to the doctor.

However, these medical chatbots can also bring harm to patients if they are not constantly updated, checked or regulated [13]. There are also potential risks when a care robot is involved in the care of patients and the elderly. When the standard of care for cancer patients changes, for example, adjusting drug doses so that they are more useful for a particular patient, and the care robot does not update the information, this can harm the patient's health [14]. Moreover, due to the limitations of the built-in software algorithm, the care robot can limit the patient's autonomy, for example, restrict his movement to ensure his safety. They may also violate patient confidentiality. Doctors and family members may know behaviors that patients don't want others to know about, such as changing clothes, bathing, etc., when using a patient care robot to monitor patients remotely. This can make patients feel a loss of dignity and affect their quality of life in the long term [15].

The development of medical ethics will continue in the context of legal and political changes. Issues related to the right to health care, regulation of medical practice, mandatory vaccinations, ethical standards and responsibility will continue to attract attention and require the development of ethical principles and guidelines.

With international challenges such as pandemics, migration and health inequalities, medical ethics will face new global challenges. It is important to develop ethical approaches to crisis management, guarantee equitable access to healthcare, and engage in global collaboration to address ethical health issues. In general, the development of medical ethics will continue in the direction of taking into account new challenges and changes in medicine and society.

## CONCLUSION

Medical ethics plays a key role in the provision of quality medical care and the formation of trusting relationships between patients and medical professionals. In the process of providing medical care, various ethical dilemmas arise that require deliberate and informed decision-making. Adherence to the principles of medical ethics promotes fair allocation of resources, respect for patient autonomy, confidentiality, and encourages emotional competence and professional accountability.

Medical ethics faces challenges related to the development of new technologies, changing values and cross-cultural differences. The ability to effectively solve algorithmic security problems depends on whether medical AI can be widely used on a large scale. In addition, at this stage, medical AI is still a machine or a program. He cannot adapt his actions to the real situation and must rely on doctors who manipulate the mechanisms or make the final decision. At the beginning of its application, doctors may suffer from machine failures due to inexperience and unskilled work, some of which (for example, errors in the operation of surgical robots) can have serious consequences. Patients would not necessarily have suffered this harm if not for the use of medical AI. An important aspect of the development of medical ethics is the integration of ethical education and training into medical training and continuing education of medical professionals. The participation of patients and the public in decision-making processes, ethical



reasoning and reflection, as well as the development of ethical regulations for new technologies are prospects for the development of medical ethics.

The main purpose of professional ethics is that it ensures the implementation of general moral principles in the conditions of professional activity of people, contributes to the successful implementation of professional duties. Professional ethics helps a specialist avoid mistakes, choose the most correct, highly moral line of behavior in various work situations. The task of professional ethics is not to give ready-made recipes for all occasions, but to teach a culture of moral thinking, to give reliable guidelines for solving specific situations, to influence the formation of moral attitudes of a specialist in accordance with the specific requirements of the profession.

The development of medical ethics will continue in accordance with changes in medical practice and society. The conscious application of ethical principles and norms in the healthcare practice contributes to improving the quality of medical care, strengthening trust and patient satisfaction, as well as the development of an ethical culture in the medical community.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed in reviewing the final version of this paper

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