

# **CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL FRAME WORK FOR NURSES**

## **Why do we need a code of conduct or ethical framework?**

Consideration of ethical issues is an essential component of providing care within the therapeutic nurse-client relationship. Nurses encounter ethical conflicts, uncertainty or distress in their everyday practice. Continuous changes in the health care system, in areas such as technology, and changes in values contribute to these ethical dilemmas. Understanding and communicating beliefs and values helps nurses to prevent ethical conflicts and to work through them when they do occur. There are many ways to understand and work through ethical situations; examples are included in different parts of this document.

## **The Purpose of the code:**

1. To provide guidance for conduct consistent with the ethical obligations of the profession in order to deliver high quality nursing care.
2. To provide means for the exercise of professional self regulation.
3. To inform both the nurse and society of the profession's expectations and requirements in ethical matters.
4. To provide a framework within which nurses can make ethical decisions and discharge their responsibilities to the public, to health team members and to the profession.

## **1. Accountability:**

Professional accountability refers to being answerable to someone for something one has done, and is fundamentally concerned with weighing up the interests of clients, in both routine and complex situations, using professional knowledge, judgment and skills which will enable nurses to account for the decision made. Nurses are also accountable for their contribution to the development of the nursing profession and to serving the interests of society.

## **Value statement:**

### **1.1. The Nurse ensures compliance with the principles and responsibilities in this code of professional conduct.**

## **Explanatory Statement:**

This code is a guide for qualified nurses to care in a manner that reflects professional conduct, protects clients, and honors the values of nurses and nursing profession. Nurses are accountable for complying with the elements contained in this code and with the standards for nursing services, education, and with the laws pertaining to the regulation of nursing practice in Somaliland

**Behavioral Directives:****The Nurse:**

- Upon entering the profession requests the code of conduct documents and reads and understands the main elements and directives of the code.
- Read and understands the bylaws and professional standards for Nursing Practice and Education.
- Complies with and utilizes the documents as a guideline for decision-making and problem-solving.
- When faced with ethical dilemmas, reports to his/her manager and colleagues and shares concerns with them.

**Value Statement:****1.2. The Nurse is Accountable for the promotion of national health care initiatives and services.****Explanatory Statement:**

The provision of high quality health services to the citizens of Somaliland requires collaborative planning at the national, regional and international level. Nursing services are an integral part of the health service. Hence, they have a professional obligation towards the promotion and maintenance of health, the prevention of disease and caring for the sick.

**Behavioral Directives:****The Nurse:**

- Recognizes the national health needs and trends and understands health problems that lead to morbidity and mortality in Bahrain.
- Contributes towards the continuous development of national health initiatives.
- Actively participates in planning and decision-making at all levels to ensure fair and just distribution of health care services.
- Adopts a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team approach in the promotion of health.
- Reports to the appropriate authority and aspect in the environment which may have negative impact on the community's health.

**Value Statement:****1.3. The Nurse Maintains Safe and High standards of professional conduct in his/her area of practice.**

**Explanatory Statement:**

As an advocate for client care, the nurse must be alert to, and take appropriate preventive as well as corrective measures regarding any instances of incompetent, unethical or illegal practice by any member of the health care team that places the client's rights and best interest in jeopardy. It is incumbent upon nurses to be aware of the employing **institution's policies and procedures, nurses' standards of practice**, the code of practice and **law governing nursing and health care practice**. It is also incumbent upon institutions/employers to ensure that policies, procedures and standards are in place and accessible to the nursing staff.

**Behavioral Directives:****The Nurse:**

- Identifies his/her own values towards the elements and standards of professional conduct.
- Conducts him/herself in a manner which promotes safe client care and maintains optimal standards of nursing practice.
- Keeps vigilant observation to identify any suspected unethical conduct of nurses and/or other health team members.
- Intervenes tactfully and professionally and notes down the unethical conduct.
- Reports to the appropriate authority, any suspected wrongdoing, unethical conduct, incompetent or unsafe practice.

**Value Statement:**

**1.4. The Nurse conducts him/herself in an honest and truthful manner that reflects credit on the profession and upholds its integrity.**

**Explanatory Statement.**

Nurses are accountable for the status and reputation of nursing. Being members of the professions, nurses earn the respect, confidence, and trust of the public by conducting themselves in a manner consistent with the ethical values of this code.

**Behavioral Directives:****The Nurse:**

- Conducts him/herself in an honest, truthful manner at all times.
- Should never be involved in the promotion of commercial products or services.
- Refuses to accept gifts and favors in return for nursing services.
- Upholds the reputation of nursing and reports any misconduct.

**Value Statement:**

**1.5. The Nurse acts always in such a manner as to promote and safeguard the interests and well-being of patients and clients.**

**Explanatory Statement:**

The nurse has a legal and professional responsibility to provide quality, competent care in keeping with recognized standards, to the best of his/her ability, and will be held accountable for the provision of this care. The nurse will promote client well-being and not perform, by either act or omission, in a manner that will be detrimental to the client's well-being.

The nurse is responsible for his/her actions, and it is no excuse to say he/she was acting on someone else's orders.

**BEHAVIOR DIRECTIVES:**

**The Nurse:**

- Always puts the needs and demands of clients first.
- Provides knowledgeable, high quality, client and family-centered nursing care.
- Promotes the health and well-being of the client in the immediate work environment and elsewhere.

**Value Statement**

**1.6. The nurse is accountable for providing quality, cost-effective primary, secondary and tertiary nursing care.**

**Explanatory statement**

The nurse is concerned with the health and well-being of human beings. To this end, the nurse will provide care directed towards health promotion and disease prevention as well as treatment intervention, rehabilitative and palliative care.

The nurse will respect and value the knowledge and skills of the health care team, and actively seek to support and collaborate with others so that maximum benefit to clients can be realized. At all times the nurse will strive to provide quality care in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

**BEHAVIOR DIRECTIVES:**

**The Nurse:**

- Ensures the client's access to information relating to health living, disease prevention, treatment intervention, and rehabilitative and palliative care.
- Takes every effort to ensure that the client can understand the information being imparted.
- Employs cost-effective and efficient means of delivering quality nursing services.
- Eliminates wastages at all times.

- Reports to an appropriate authority or the national nursing association any undesirable conditions of employment.
- Maintains and improves the practice environment and safeguards the health and safety of colleagues and clients at all times.
- Provides equitable opportunities for incentives, promotions and career development.

**Value Statement**

**1.9. The Nurse develops and maintains own level of competence and fosters those of other nurses.**

**Explanatory Statement**

Nursing is dynamic. It continues to develop and grow. New knowledge, intromission, and technology necessitate promotion of nurses, professional standers. Nurses have an obligation to promote and integrate new techniques and knowledge, especially in their particular field of practice; and they continue learning and acquiring current knowledge and skills.

**BEHAVIORAL DIRECTIVES:**

**The Nurse:**

- Actively participates in continuous on-the job leering activities.
- Assumes personal responsibility for gaining new knowledge and skills
- Acknowledges his/her own limitation, and declines any duties unless able to perform.
- Refers clients to and consults with other nurses or health care team members who possess the expertise.
- Assists nursing colleagues and other health care team members to develop their professional competence.
- Mentors, teaches and guides nursing, nursing students and support workers.

**Value Statement.**

**1.10 The Nurse is Accountable for the Development of a core of professional knowledge through research and dissemination of information.**

**Explanatory Statement.**

Nurses engage in research for the purpose of developing the nursing profession's body of knowledge while protecting the client's rights for decision-making and privacy.

**BEHAVIORAL DIRECTIVES:**

**The Nurse:**

- Participates in research and shares research finding with colleagues.
- Is a provider of evidence-based practice in his/her respective specialty areas?
- Gets approval from client's their families, and nursing management before

- conducting research.
- Participates in guiding student's project and research studies.

### **Value Statement**

**1.11. The Nurse maintains his/her own physical, mental and emotional well-being.**

### **Explanatory Statement.**

Nurses need to engage in Health-related activities and refrain from those which may jeopardize their health and well-being and are inconsistent with their abilities and roles as health care providers and advocates.

They are accountable for informing the employer about their own physical, emotional and mental ill health and those of other nurses. They must never compromise safe and competent client care.

### **BEHAVIORAL DIRECTIVES:**

The Nurse:

- Practices a healthy lifestyle to keep an optimal state of health.
- Recognize and refrains from factors that may affect his/her own state of health
- Promptly informs the employer about his/her own physical, emotional or mental ill health.

### **SCENARIO 1**

**Read the Following real scenarios.**

1. "Staffing is limited on a busy medical ward-only one registered nurse and two health auxiliary nurses are on duty. An elderly lady is very distressed due to severe constipation. The doctor orders a suppository, the staff nurse is aware that the auxiliary nurses should not insert the suppository, but she is very busy with a dying patient. The health care assistant has observed suppositories being inserted many times and the elderly lady is shouting for relief. At the same time the dying patient and his family are in need of immediate attention. The staff nurse delegates to the health care assistants to carry out the doctor's order".
2. "Nurse (A), a recent graduate, noted that nurse (B) failed to do the appropriate assessment for the clients. She also observes that most of

the clinical decisions of the nurse are based on general routine activities of the unit, and the nurse is at times rude to clients and is disorganized. No incidences have yet happened. The nurse graduate did not report her observations to the nurse manager for fear of losing popularity and being labeled as a problem maker”

Reflect on the ethical value of accountability, and its elements. Identify the dilemma in the above scenarios where accountability is ignored or violated. Discuss with professional colleague (s) the best course of action (s) and/or behavior (s)

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