Ethical Decision Making in School Health

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Objectives
- Identify the professional organizations whose codes of ethics define our practice
- Describe the relevance of ethics to practice
- Use the Code of Ethics in case scenarios

Ethics defined
- A guiding philosophy
- The principles of conduct governing an individual or a group

Merriam Webster Online (2014)
What is a code of ethics?
- Provides a guiding philosophy
- Sets boundaries and expectations for professional behavior
- Framework for decision making
  - Orientation of new nurses
  - Practice Situations
  - Evaluation of Nursing Practice

Nightingale Pledge
- To practice my profession faithfully
- Abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous
- Will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug
- Maintain and elevate the standard of my profession
- Will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping and all family affairs coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling
- With loyalty I will devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care

ANA, 2014

NASN Code of Ethics

Client Care
Professional Competency
Professional Responsibility
Code of Ethics for NC Educators

Commitment to the Student
Commitment to the School and School System
Commitment to the Profession

Putting it all together...

Goals
Values
Obligations

Client Care
Professional Competence
Professional Responsibilities
Commitment to the Student
Commitment to the Profession
Commitment to the School & LEA

Ways to Use a Code of Ethics

- Orientation of new staff
- Creating professional identity
- Establishing professional standards
- Establish an ethical climate
- Practice Situations
- Performance Evaluation
Orientation of New Staff

- Establish professional identity
  - Job description states primary purpose
- Sets professional standards
  - Duties, responsibilities & essential job functions
- Sets an ethical climate
  - Expectations for professional performance

Framework for Client Care

- Professional boundaries
- Privacy/confidentiality
- Gender/race/religious issues
- DNAR orders

Framework for Competency

- Is the nurse knowledgeable of laws, rules, and standards
- Is the nurse aware of local policy & procedure
- Is there an assessment process for establishing competency
- Is continuing education utilized to improve areas of weakness
Framework for Responsibility

- Membership in professional organizations
- Standardized Data Set participation
- Incorporation of research into practice
- Data analysis to address system needs

Performance Evaluation

- Professional Standards
- Job Description
- Performance Evaluation

SN Evaluation Rubric
Sample artifacts

Next Up...
- Using the Code for Decision Making
- Iredell-Statesville Schools ethics awareness training for all staff including school nurses
- Case Scenario Activity

Implementing the Model in School Health
Troublesome situation
Ethical problem or Ethical Elements that require attention?

Identifying an Ethical Quandary

- Ethical Problems have one or more of the following characteristics:
  - Conflicts with values, obligations, loyalties, interests, or needs
  - Requires a decision about the morally right action
  - Requires the choice be influenced by ethical principals and values

Identifying an Ethical Quandary

- Choices for action seem to be equally problematic from an ethical perspective for those affected directly and indirectly
- Choices are affected by the feelings and values of the involved individuals and by the demands or context of the situation
- Requires an interdisciplinary approach for an ethically justifiable response

It is important to clarify the existence of one or more of these characteristics. A clear legal issue may not fit a situation of inadequate communication or a clear legal issue.
Ethical Framework for Decision Making

- Identified a situation
- A framework is used to analyze and develop

Elements that constitute the framework

Elements

- What is the situation?
- What is the relevant information?
- Identify the affected parties or stakeholders
Elements...
- Identify the specific ethical issue or conflict
- Identify choices for action and the ethical justification

Elements...
- Identify the foreseeable consequences of the different options for action
- Select a course of action and evaluate the actual consequences

Elements...
- Identify what has been learned in similar problem-solving or decision-making situations
Goal of Response

- Well thought out
- Reflective of attention to morally relevant features of the situation
- Sensitive to those involved

Goal...

- Protecting relationships
- Supporting those making difficult decisions
- Promoting effective communication
Group Activity

- Case Scenarios

References