

## MHSC104 The Health and Social Care Profession

ECTS Value: 4 ECTS  
Self-Study Hours: 48

Contact Hours: 20  
Assessment Hours: 32

### Overall Objectives and Outcomes

Clinicians and other health workers are constantly being faced with different moral dilemmas and ethical issues pertaining to the field of medicine and care. Optimal patient or client safety is the key role of health and social care workers. To ensure this, four ethical principles need to be considered during decision making: Autonomy, Beneficence, Non-maleficence and Justice. This module will examine how these principles may be applied by different health and social care professions. Sometimes deciding on an appropriate ethical course of action is not an easy task and it is normal for rules and principles to conflict, especially in the field of healthcare.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

### Competences

- a. Examine general principles in the context of healthcare decisions and employ a critical view in their application;
- b. Critique how current local and international legislation promote high quality care.
- c. Conduct research related to ethical issues using the Principles of Biomedical Ethics;
- d. Devise different ways of dealing with conflicts that may arise with service-users, their relatives and/or colleagues which may hinder the effectiveness of care procedures;
- e. Develop different ways of dealing with ethical dilemmas when supporting the rights of individuals accessing services;
- f. Devise ways of how the Code of Conduct and Practice for Social Service Workers may be applied in different real-life scenarios.
- g. Discuss with confidence and understanding how to produce the greatest balance of positive value over disvalue in a particular healthcare setting;
- h. Employ advanced communication skills in various settings, including during conflict with service user and colleagues alike.

### Knowledge

- a. Recognise ethical issues, eliciting a sense of moral obligation and responsibility;
- b. Develop an understanding of the process of decision making and the values that pertain a health and social care context;
- c. Reflect on the importance of working in a multidisciplinary team in order to meet the service users' needs in a holistic way;
- d. Develop a thorough understanding of the core values which promote high quality care when working with service users and their relatives;
- e. Outline general ethical principles that can be applied in all healthcare contexts;

- f. Reflect on how failing to adhere to the principles that guide Health and Social Care professionals may negatively impact the quality of service provided.
- g. Understand the ethical challenges posed by multicultural society to healthcare;
- h. Apply the knowledge acquired through literature on current legislation to how this can be put into practice in reality.
- i. Develop an understanding of what current local and international legislation state vis-a-vis the promotion of high quality care.

## Skills

### Applying knowledge and understanding

The learner will be able to:

- a. Identify the ethical problem(s) germane to decision making by health and social care professionals;
- b. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles of:
  - Autonomy
  - Beneficence
  - Non-maleficence
  - Justice;
- c. Assess the principles available to decision making to provide person-centered care;
- d. Identify ethical challenges in a clinical context, and in the field of normative healthcare ethics;
- e. Discuss health disparities and the difficulties related to the development of normative ethical arguments in a multicultural context;
- f. Identify the importance of making good use of advanced verbal and non-verbal communication skills, such as empathy and speech pace when giving a service;
- g. Identify how barriers to communication may be overcome to make sure service user are given a dignified service;
- h. Examine the importance of giving priority to the needs and rights of all individuals accessing the various services within the health sector, thus promoting a person-centred approach to care;
- i. Evaluate how the four ethical principles emerge from the most basic concept of inherent human dignity;
- j. Analyse what decisions will best benefit the rights and needs of service-users;
- k. Analyse ways of dealing with conflict in different situations;
- l. Creatively evaluate on how to give the best possible service to individuals.

### Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Ongoing Online Forum and Presentation

### Suggested Readings

1. Beauchamp, Tom L. and Childress, James F. Principles of Biomedical Ethics. Seventh edition. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2013.
2. Gastmans, C. "Dignity-Enhancing Nursing Care: A Foundational Ethical Framework." Nurs Ethics 20, no. 2 (Mar 2013): 142-9.
3. Arnold, J. Coine, I. Randall, R. and Patterson F. Work Psychology: Human Behaviour in the Workplace. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson Education Ltd, 2020
4. Liddle, D. Managing Conflict: A Practical Guide to Resolution in the Workplace. Kogan Page Ltd, 2017.
5. Beattie, G. and Ellis, A. The Psychology of Language and Communication. Classic Edition. Routledge, 2017.

6. Egan, E. The Skilled Helper: A Client Centred Approach. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Cengage Learning EMEA, 2017.
7. The Constitution of Malta, Articles 14, 17, 32, 40 and 45.
8. [http://www.maltaemployers.com/Portals/22/code\\_conduct\\_en.pdf](http://www.maltaemployers.com/Portals/22/code_conduct_en.pdf)