



Virtuous Practice in Nursing

Online Appendices

Survey

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Section A: Ethical Dilemmas

In this section we ask you to respond to the kinds of dilemmas that nurses might face in their working lives and provide three reasons for your responses. There are six scenarios. Each scenario has two courses of action and you should assume that both are equally available to you. Imagine you to be the nurse and select one course of action for each scenario. You will then be asked to rank three possible reasons for your choice.

1) Elderly patient

You are a staff nurse who enjoyed working in the elderly ward. But recently you feel the job is not as rewarding as it was before because new changes prevent spending much time with the patients. You are frustrated with your new conditions and feel sorry for the patients as sometimes the changes have compromised fundamental care. In the worst case an elderly patient died without anyone around him. The management is ignoring all requests for more staff but subtly pressurising staff to manage with fewer staff so that they can meet their financial targets.

What would you do? (Please choose one option)

- (1) Just live with the new policies and attempt to operate as effectively as you can within them.
- (2) Speak to your matron and alert higher authorities if things do not improve.

You have chosen to

- (1) Just live with the new policies and attempt to operate as effectively as you can within them. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? (Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)**

	Things are like this everywhere and you are hopeful and optimistic that it will improve.
	You do not believe that you will have any luck influencing management, so it is better to keep quiet.
	You have a duty to continue helping your patients.
	You want to avoid trouble for yourself or others.
	You are a determined person and want to continue to be there for your patients as much as you can despite the forces working against you.
	You are expected to follow management rules.

You have chosen to

(2) Speak to your matron and alert higher authorities if things do not improve. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision?

(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)

	Everyone will be better off in the long run if you speak up.
	You have a duty of care to your patients.
	This is the compassionate thing to do.
	If you or someone close to you were in the patients' position you would want the staff to take action.
	You are a courageous person and if there is a shadow of doubt in your mind about the care given, you will escalate your concerns.
	If any more of these incidents happen, you will feel guilty.

2) Difficult colleague

You are a nurse in a local hospital. You are about to finish your busy shift and know that the next shift is already going to be one nurse short. Your colleague arrives to take over from you smelling of alcohol. This is not the first time she has arrived for duty smelling of alcohol.

What would you do? (Please choose one option)

- (1) Speak to your colleague privately
- (2) Speak to the nurse-in-charge

You have chosen to

(1) Speak to your colleague privately

What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision?

(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)

	Your colleague might be troubled and speaking privately is the kindest thing to do.
	Nurses have a responsibility to work with colleagues to preserve the safety of those receiving care.
	You are trying to solve the problem without damaging your colleague's career.
	You would want a colleague to approach you first if you were in that position.
	You decide that the wise thing to do would be to find out why your colleague smells of alcohol before taking any further action.
	You want your colleague to be able to work as the unit is already short-staffed.

You have chosen to

(2) Speak to the nurse-in charge

What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision?

(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)

	A brave person would speak up about this.
	You would not want to be treated by a nurse smelling of alcohol if you were a patient.
	Your Code of Professional Conduct requires that you do all you can to prevent harm to patients.
	You think this is the kind thing to do to protect your colleague's reputation with her co-workers.
	You want to prevent potentially harmful consequences for patients.
	There may be risks for you personally if you do not report her.

3) Dying patient

You are a newly qualified staff nurse and have been looking after a terminally ill patient for the last few shifts. She is now in the last hours of life. The patient is competent and asks you, "Am I dying?" The patient's son insists that his mother should not be informed of the prognosis.

What would you do? ***(Please choose one option.)***

- (1) You tell her that she is dying.
- (2) You do not tell her that she is dying.

You have chosen to

(1) Tell her that she is dying.

What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision?

(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)

	It is the honest thing to do.
	You could not live with yourself if you did not tell her.
	Though it is difficult, you feel it is the courageous thing to do.
	Professional guidance states that if patients are competent they need to be informed of their condition and diagnosis.
	Knowing the truth will be better for her.
	Withholding this information is a violation of her autonomy.

You have chosen to

(2) Not to tell her that she is dying

What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision?

(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)

	A wise person would know that, despite her asking, the patient does not really want to know.
	You wouldn't really want to know the truth if you were in her position.
	As a newly qualified nurse you lack the required experience and training to communicate this information to the patient.
	You do not think you can handle telling her the truth properly and worry that you will make matters worse for all by trying.
	She is better off not knowing.
	This is really the kindest thing to do.

4) The difficult patient

It is the weekend and a patient, Mr. Jones, who is labelled 'difficult', is in pain. The regular analgesia has just been reduced in dose and so the volume is also reduced. The nurse prepares the new, reduced dose but makes the volume the same as the previous higher dose so that Mr. Jones cannot tell the difference.

What would you do? ***(Please choose one option.)***

- (1) Continue this practice
- (2) Refuse to follow this practice

You have chosen to

(1) Continue this practice. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? ***(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)***

	It is wiser to keep Jones in the dark given everything else the staff must deal with.
	The deception spares you a pointless squabble with Mr Jones.
	Reducing the dosage is the doctor's orders.
	The deception ensures that all staff members are free to assist other patients with real problems.
	You have a duty to help other patients with real problems, not squabble with Mr Jones over his dosage.
	It is only kind to spare Jones from having to deal with both the pain and accept that he is not permitted a higher dose.

You have chosen to

(2) Refuse to follow this practice. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? ***(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)***

	Trust between nurses and patients would be grievously damaged if nurses always deceived their patients like this.
	It is wrong to infantilize and manipulate patients like this.
	It is unwise to get into the habit of misleading people, even when it seems harmless.
	You may get into trouble if your deception is discovered.
	You want to be truthful to your patients about their care.
	You are professionally obligated not to deceive your patients.

5) Hospital admission

You are working with a community nurse who knows Mrs E and her partner very well. You are told that Mrs E is receiving palliative care at home and has an Advanced Care Plan, which you have not seen, stating that she is not to be admitted to hospital should her condition deteriorate. You visit one afternoon with a different community nurse because the regular nurse needed suddenly to be at her child's school, when Mrs E suffers quite severe chest pain and becomes semi-conscious. Both you and the patient's partner tell the community nurse about the Advanced Care Plan though it cannot be found. The community nurse, though very sympathetic, telephones for an ambulance. What would you do? ***(Please choose one option.)***

- (1) You insist the ambulance be cancelled
- (2) You permit the paramedics to be called

You have chosen to

(1) You insist the ambulance be cancelled. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? ***(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)***

	You worry that Mrs E will suffer more distress if she is admitted against her wish.
	A caring person would want to honour Mrs E's wishes.
	You have been told that the Advanced Care Plan states that Mrs E is not to be admitted to a hospital.
	It seems unwise of the new nurse to just take charge like this with so little knowledge of her patient

	You will feel guilty if you let the admission go ahead.
	Treating Mrs E against her wishes is wrong.

You have chosen to

(2) You permit the paramedics to be called. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? *(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)*

	You have a duty to protect the well-being of your patients.
	It would not be wise to stop emergency treatment on the basis of an Advance Care Plan that you have not seen and cannot be found.
	The professional code of conduct requires you to administer care in life-threatening situations if no documentation to the contrary is produced.
	Mrs E's family and friends would be devastated by her sudden death.
	You are worried that if Mrs E dies you may be in trouble.
	You worry that Mrs E's life is clearly in danger and the kindest thing to do is to get her in the hospital for the care she needs currently.

6) Friendly patient

You get on very well with Pat, a patient you have been looking after for a while. Pat has multiple health problems and is frequently admitted to hospital for management of exacerbations. You have discovered that you share an interest in environmental issues and that Pat has been running an online campaign to highlight the plight of Dolphins being caught in fishing nets. This is a cause particularly close to your heart. Pat lives near to you and has suggested you meet up when Pat is discharged from hospital and that you exchange contact details and become Facebook friends.

What would you do? *(Please choose one option)*

- (1) You accept the invitation
- (2) You decline the invitation

You have chosen (1)

(1) You accept the invitation. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? *(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)*

	You get on well with Pat and care about the friendship.
	Nothing in the Professional Code of Conduct forbids getting involved in campaigns run by patients.

	A just and caring person would take every opportunity to advance the cause.
	This is an opportunity to do some good for a cause which is close to your heart.
	There is nothing wrong with making new friends.
	You do not want to appear rude by refusing.

You have chosen (2)

(2) You decline the invitation. What do you consider to be the three best reasons for your decision? *(Please rank those in order of appropriateness.)*

	It is generally imprudent to become friends with your patients.
	Befriending patients is forbidden by professional codes of conduct.
	It would be unfair to both you and Pat to begin a friendship you may later have to end for professional reasons.
	You want to avoid trouble or criticism with your colleagues and employer.
	You have a personal rule never to befriend your patients.
	It could lead to problems if Pat is admitted in the future.

Section B: Your Character Strengths

This section of the survey is an opportunity for you to consider your character strengths. Below is a list of twenty-four character strengths. Please choose the six strengths which you think best describe the sort of person you are. ***Please rank these from 1 to 6 (1 = the strongest.)***

- **Appreciation of beauty/excellence**
- **Bravery**
- **Creativity**
- **Curiosity**
- **Fairness**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Honesty**
- **Hope**
- **Humour**
- **Judgement**
- **Kindness**
- **Leadership**
- **Love**
- **Love of learning**
- **Modesty**
- **Perseverance**
- **Perspective**
- **Prudence**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Social intelligence**
- **Spirituality**
- **Teamwork**
- **Zest**

Judaism

Sikhism

Other religion (please specify):

None

5) Do you practice your religion?

Yes (please go to **Question No. 7**)

No

6) Are you:

Atheist

Agnostic

Humanist

Other (please specify): _____

7) What is your country of citizenship?

Section E: The Ideal Nurse

1) This section asks you to think about what sort of person makes a good nurse. Below is a list of twenty-four character strengths. Please choose the six which you think best describe a good nurse. *(Please rank these from 1 to 6 (1 = the strongest.)*

— **Appreciation of beauty/excellence**

— **Bravery**

— **Creativity**

— **Curiosity**

— **Fairness**

— **Forgiveness**

— **Gratitude**

— **Honesty**

— **Hope**

— **Humour**

— **Judgement**

— **Kindness**

— **Leadership**

— **Love**

— **Love of learning**

— **Modesty**

— **Perseverance**

— **Perspective**

— **Prudence**

— **Self-regulation**

— **Social intelligence**

— **Spirituality**

— **Teamwork**

— **Zest**

- 2) Can you think of a nurse you have met who shows many of these character strengths? If so, please use the box below to describe how they show these strengths in their work.

- 3) How important do you think the virtue of compassion is for nursing? ***(Please tick)***

Essential

Very important

Not very important

Not at all important

- 4) Prior to coming to nursing had you completed another higher education qualification?

Yes

No ***(If you have ticked No, please go to page 17)***

5) What is the level of this previous qualification? (If you completed your qualification outside the UK please select the equivalent UK qualification).

Higher National Certificate (HNC)/Certificate of Higher Education (CHE)

Higher National Diploma (HND)/Foundation Degree/Diploma of Higher Education (DHE)

Bachelors

Masters

Doctorate

6) What is the subject area of this qualification?

Agriculture and Food Studies

Architecture, Building and Planning

Biological Sciences

Business and Administration

Creative Arts

Computing Sciences

Education

Engineering and Technology

Historical, Philosophical or Theological Studies

Languages, Literature or Cultural Studies

Law

Mathematics

Media and Communication Studies

Medicine and Dentistry

Physical Sciences

Social, Economic and Political Studies

Veterinary Sciences

7) Prior to joining nursing had you worked in any other occupation(s) for more than one year?

Yes

No

If yes, which occupation(s)?

For how many years?

1-5 years

6-10 years

More than 10 years

Reasons: Please describe your reasons for choosing the nursing profession.