

EDITORIAL

Ethical and Legal Aspects of Nursing Care: a Focus on the Greek Legislation

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Abstract

The main nurse's responsibility is to take care of the patients who deserve appropriate and safe care. Nurses have to know ethical issues in order to conduct their care, and to give safe and proper legal and ethical care in their patients. The ethics of health care includes the principles on how professionals fulfill their responsibilities.

There are eight ethical principles that nurses consider when making decisions in clinical setting: autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, truthfulness, justice, paternalism, faith and devotion, respect for others. Nurses have to know the tort differs from the offense. Any human behavior disapproved of the law is tort. Also, it is useful for them to know that criminal responsibility is born when the offenses described in the criminal law intentional and only exceptionally when solemnized, negligence, while for the case of tort and negligence suffices.

Nurses should have special competence and knowledge about ethical and legal issues. They have to act legally in order to protect their patients and themselves. Further research is needed in order to understand how nurses behave in practice in difficult situation.

Key words: ethical, legal, nurses, law, tort, offense