

# **Facilitators' Guide for teaching medical ethics to undergraduate students in medical colleges in the South-East Asia Region**



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# Facilitators' Guide for teaching medical ethics to undergraduate students in medical colleges in the South-East Asia Region



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## Introduction

The knowledge about the principles and practice of medical ethics is very important and relevant for a medical professional. This is due to a variety of reasons including increasing medical litigation, changes in complexities in medical practice and the growing importance of consumer courts.

In response to this realization, WHO, both at the global and regional levels, has been promoting the teaching of ethics both in health care practice and research. One of the activities carried out by the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia has been to review the situation with regard to teaching of medical ethics in six countries of the Region (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka). The review concluded that the teaching of ethics in these countries is in a state of infancy and recommended that measures be taken to improve the situation.

In response, WHO/SEARO developed a module on medical ethics for medical students in the South-East Asia Region. The module was finalized at the expert group meeting held in WHO/SEARO on 25-26 September 2008.

The expert group also deliberated on measures to facilitate the implementation of the module. Lack of suitable learning resources and paucity of trained faculty to teach medical ethics were identified as some of the constraints. The expert group recommended the development of handbooks for students and facilitators.

The proposed module was subsequently presented at the second meeting of the Network of Medical Councils in South-East Asia Regional Countries held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 10-12 November 2008. The network fully endorsed the module and recommended WHO support for the development of a Handbook and Facilitators' Guide in order to ensure effective implementation of the module.

This Facilitators' Guide for teaching of medical ethics has been prepared with an objective of helping the teachers of medical ethics according to the module for the curriculum developed by WHO SEARO and endorsed by the medical councils of the region. It is recommended that country-specific changes may be made where appropriate.

The Facilitators' Guide was presented to a group of experts in a meeting organized by WHO in Dhaka from 27 to 30 October 2009. The expert group provided extensive suggestions to improve it. The Guide has been revised accordingly. The Facilitators' Guide has followed the module curriculum on medical ethics approved by the meeting of the Network of Medical Councils of South East Asia Region. The lesson plans follow the module curriculum with minor adjustments made to accommodate the suggestions of the experts.

## How to use the guide?

The facilitators' guide is intended for facilitators of different topics in medical ethics. It is meant to guide the facilitators in determining the performance and learning objectives for each ethical issue. The methods and materials suggested are to help the facilitators in their initial stages of teaching medical ethics. It is expected that with increasing experience, the facilitators will supplement and expand the teaching methods and materials. Feedback from facilitators will help to further improve the guide. The duration of lessons is based on the advice from experts. However, individual teachers and departments are free to make their own adjustments.

The guide can be used for the training of trainers for teaching medical ethics. Use of this material, hopefully, will provide an opportunity to field test it and make it more user-friendly.

## Ethics in medical education

Medical ethics is one of the most important components of medical education. In an analogy of the human body, if learning the scientific foundation of medical sciences is like acquiring a “head”, acquisition of psychomotor skills represents the “hand” and learning of professionalism and medical ethics is like acquiring a “heart”. Therefore, medical ethics is at the “heart” of medical practice and this fact needs to be stressed repeatedly to medical students.

## General objectives of the Facilitators’ Guide

This Facilitators’ guide will assist teachers of medical colleges in the South-East Asia Region to teach medical ethics to undergraduate medical students according to the module curriculum developed by WHO/SEARO and endorsed by the network of medical councils of the Region.

## Specific objectives

Use of this guide will help the teachers of medical ethics to:

- (a) Describe the general outline and overall organization of teaching of medical ethics in MBBS programmes in South-East Asian countries.
- (b) Outline a plan for teaching of content areas identified in the module.
- (c) List the methods to be employed in teaching content areas.
- (d) List the materials to be used to facilitate teaching/learning strategy including case vignettes.
- (e) Conduct teaching/learning sessions as outlined in the module curriculum.
- (f) List the methods for assessment of learning of different content areas.

- (g) Enable the facilitator to develop a mechanism to receive feedback from students.
- (h) Assess the students' knowledge in the field of medical ethics in the different domains of behaviour e.g, knowledge, attitude and skills.

## Overall organization of the course

Core topics, duration and responsible units or departments are tabulated below. Objectives, teaching/learning methods, materials and evaluation plans have been detailed in the relevant lesson plans.

## Responsible units/departments

The responsible/leading unit/department may be forensic medicine, or the medical education unit or department of behavioural and medical ethics. A multidisciplinary team approach should be adopted in all cases.

Facilitators need to be trained before they take up teaching medical ethics.

The teaching of ethics should preferably be under the leadership of the forensic medicine department with multidisciplinary involvement; however the university/colleges should have the liberty to plan whatever is best for them.

## Course outline for core topics

Content area: core topics	Duration	Responsible person/Unit
Introduction to principles and history of medical ethics	60 minutes	MED and Forensic Medicine
Professionalism Codes of conduct and etiquette	60 minutes	MED FM
Medical negligence, infamous conduct and misconduct	60 minutes	FM

Content area: core topics	Duration	Responsible person/Unit
Doctor : patient relationship: General principles Autonomy Informed consent Confidentiality Truth telling, disclosure Patients' rights, end-of-life decisions	3X60 minutes	MED FM, DCM & FM
Ethical dilemmas: Dealing with pharmaceutical industry and other providers of health care Ethical issues in health care provision by the private sector Ethical challenges facing medical students	60 minutes	Pharmacology IM and any other department of clinical discipline
Ethical dilemmas: Lesson 8: Reproductive health	60 minutes	DObs&Gyn
Ethical dilemmas: Lesson 9: Treating patients with HIV/AIDS	60 minutes	Internal medicine

## Course outline for specific topics

Content area: specific topics	Time	Responsible unit
Genetics Ethical issues in genetic services	60 minutes	Department of anatomy, a paediatrics, DObs&Gyn
Ethical issues in organ donation and transplantation	60 minutes	Department of General Surgery

Content area: specific topics	Time	Responsible unit
Ethical issues in treating patients with mental illness	Theory: 1 hour Ward-based: 2 hours	Deparatry
Ethical issues in child care	Theory: 1 hr, Ward based: 2 hrs	Department of Paediatrics
Public health and health promotion Equity and social justice, ethical issues in resource allocation Dealing with alternative systems of medicine	Theory: 1 hour Community-based discussions: 2 hours	DCM and FM/MED
Research ethics	60 minutes	DCM&FM/MED

Total duration: 15 hours of theory and an additional six hours for ward or community-based discussions: total of 21 hours

Abbreviations:

MED: Medical Education Department

DCM&FM: Department of Community Medicine and Family Health

DObs&Gyn: Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

DCP: Department of Clinical Pharmacology

FM: Department of Forensic Medicine

IM: Department of Internal Medicine

## Outline for a lesson plan

It is advised that for each topic to be learnt by the students, a plan for the lesson(s) should be developed. The plan should include the following:

Facilitator's name..... Date .....

Venue.....

Objectives .....

Duration.....

Teaching methods.....

Teaching aids .....

Assessment .....

Review/summary .....

References/further reading

Assessment: After the formative assessment the students are expected to develop the skill in ethical practice throughout in the studentship. There will be a summative evaluation at the end of the final clinical examination.

## Core Topic 1: Introduction to medical ethics

### Lesson 1: Principles and history of medical ethics

**Duration:** One hour

#### *General objectives*

The objective of this session would be to help students to learn the history of medical ethics as well as the relevance and importance of ethical principles and to familiarize them with the principles that govern the practice of medicine.

#### *Specific objectives*

At the end of the session the student will be able to:

- Describe the global and regional development of medical ethics.
- Define medical ethics.
- Describe the importance and relevance of ethics in medical practice.
- List the ethical principles.
- List the duties of a doctor.
- Identify the potential situation where breach of ethical principles can occur.
- Identify the legal and professional measures to promote ethical medical practice.
- Demonstrate awareness of cultural diversity in medical care.

### *Teaching methods*

- Introductory presentation: relevance of learning in ethics, global and indigenous development of ethics and codes of ethics.
- Short reading assignment: Duties of a medical doctor: General Medical Council (GMC), UK, development of indigenous code of ethics in the South East Asia Region
- Short presentation: Ethical principles in medical practice
- Brainstorming: interactive session to identify the potential breaches of ethical principle in medical practice.
- Group work: Measures to promote ethical principles in medical practice.

### *Teaching Aids*

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 1/ Chapter 1: Ethics and medical ethics and Chapter 2: Human civilization and medical ethics from WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics, 2009.
- World Medical Association (WMA) declaration on duties of a physician as quoted in the Handbook of Medical Ethics WHO 2009

### *Assessment*

- Formative: level of interaction of a student, (optional use of pre- and post-test questionnaire).
- Summative: Short answer questions in end-term examination

## **Core Topic 2: Professionalism**

### **Lesson Plan 2: Professionalism, code of conduct and etiquette, medical negligence, infamous conduct and misconduct**

**Duration:** Two hours

## *Overall Objectives*

The overall objective of this session is to enable the students to:

- Demonstrate awareness of the main professional obligations of doctors and a familiarity with the statutory requirements and codes of conduct for medical practice in the country where they work.

## *Specific Objectives*

- Define professionalism.
- Explain the key attributes of the medical profession.
- Describe the role of the national medical council in ensuring professionalism among medical professionals and the key features of the code of conduct.
- Describe the statutory requirements for medical practitioners.
- Discuss the advantages of professionalism for both the patients and medical practitioners.
- Discuss the relationship of a medical practitioner with colleagues and with the public.
- Define the term, medical negligence.
- Describe the criteria for judging an act as willful medical negligence.
- Discuss the factors that could lead to medical negligence and ways to avoid them.
- Define the term, professional misconduct.
- List the disciplinary procedures invited by professional misconduct.
- Discuss the necessity for self-regulation in maintaining the standard of medical practice.

## *Teaching Methods*

- Mini-lecture: definition, attributes of a medical professional, salient features of the code of conduct.
- Case summaries detailing complaint against doctors of negligence, misconduct or infamous conduct given to the students.

- Students' discussion to identify the problems in the case and give them labels.
- Students' interaction on how to prevent negligence, misconduct or infamous conduct.

### *Teaching Aids*

- Complaints against doctors: real and potential from the media
- Code of conduct from the National Medical Council, International Code of Ethics, WMA Declaration.
- Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 2, Chapter 3: Code of conduct of good practice
  - Part 2, Chapter 4: Professionalism
  - Part 2, Chapter 5: Medical negligence
  - Part 2, Chapter 6: Professional Misconduct

### *Assessment*

- Level of interaction
- End of the session question answer
- Short answer questions in end term examination

## **Core Topic 3: Doctor : patient relationship**

### **Lesson 3: Autonomy, informed consent, confidentiality, truth telling and disclosure**

**Duration:** Two hours

### *Overall Objectives*

The overall objective of this session will be to help students to become familiar with the spectrum of doctor:patient relationship. It is expected that the students will develop an attitude of respecting the autonomy of patients through informed consent and truth telling, respect their privacy and maintain confidentiality.

## *Specific Objectives*

- Describe the obligations of a doctor to a patient in a doctor:patient relationship.
- Define “autonomy” in the context of doctor:patient relationship.
- Explain the term autonomy and its importance in a doctor:patient relationship.
- Describe the potential situations in which the autonomy of a patient can be overlooked in a doctor:patient relationship.
- Describe the patient’s obligations to a doctor when a doctor:patient relationship is established.
- Describe the components of a consent form and the situations in which obtaining consent is required.
- Describe the importance of obtaining a valid consent from a patient for investigations and treatment.
- Describe the process to be followed if the patient refuses consent.
- Describe the process to be followed if the patient is incompetent to give consent on account of being a child or mentally challenged or unconscious.
- List the situations in which it is justifiable to refrain from obtaining consent from a patient.
- Describe the terms, “privacy” and “confidentiality”.
- Describe the difference between privacy and confidentiality.
- State the importance of maintaining confidentiality in a doctor:patient relationship.
- Identify weaknesses in the health care and information system which can potentially breach patient confidentiality and suggest mitigating measures.
- List the potential situations in which it is justifiable to breach confidentiality including the legal requirements.
- Evaluate critically the practice of confidentiality in the ward setting.
- Explain the term, “disclosure” and its importance in a doctor:patient relationship.
- Recognize the importance of telling the patients the truth about his or her medical condition.

- List the situations in which withholding information from a patient or his or her relative is justifiable.
- Discuss the doctor's role in telling the truth when there is a disagreement between the doctor's, patient's or guardian's view.
- Decide about giving relevant information to a patient or his / her family member by another member of the medical team or medical student.

### **Teaching Methods**

- Mini-lecture: teachers to explain the terms : autonomy, consent, confidentiality and truth telling.
- Reading assignment.
- Role play.
- Students are given case scenarios and asked to suggest a course of action or identify the breach of ethical principles and guide the discussion.

### **Teaching Aids**

- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics, resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 9-43.*
- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics; Part 2: Chapter 1: Doctor patient relationship: Section A: General Principles B: Patient autonomy C: Confidentiality D: Truth telling and disclosure E: Informed consent.
- Article: S.Tetali: Patient privacy during a clinical examination: *IJME* Apr-June2007.

### **Assessment**

- Formative: Pre- and post-test questionnaires and level of interaction in the discussion in the class.
- Summative: Short Answer Questions (SAQ) and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) in the final examination.

## Core Topic 3: Doctor:patient relationship

### Lesson 4: Patients' rights and end-of-life decisions

**Duration:** one hour

#### *Overall Objectives*

The overall objective of this session is to help students become familiar with the different dimensions of the doctor:patient relationship. After completing this session the students will have an awareness of patients' and providers' rights in the context of the doctor:patient relationship. This session will also enable the learners to participate meaningfully in the end-of-life decisions by applying the ethical principles underlying management options with regard to terminally ill patients.

#### *Specific Objectives*

- Describe the concept of rights of individuals including providers' rights.
- Identify the relationship between rights, duties and responsibilities.
- Describe the salient features of Rights of the Patients developed by the World Medical Association (WMA).
- Explain the terms "best interests", "advance directives", "withdrawal or withholding of life support system", "do not resuscitate (DNR) orders" and "euthanasia".
- Explain the term "good death" and the principles involved in providing "good death to a terminally ill patient".
- Describe the legal situation with regard to euthanasia and respond appropriately to a person requesting for euthanasia.
- Communicate effectively the end-of-life decisions to appropriate persons.

#### *Teaching Methods*

- Teachers to present provisions made in WMA declaration and code of councils regarding patients' and providers' rights.
- Teachers to explain the terms listed under the objectives.

- Students to be provided with case vignettes about terminally ill patients and asked to discuss the issues in the group and make a presentation.

### Teaching Aids

- WMA declaration and national code of ethics.
- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 83-86.*
- SD Adhikary, R.Raviraj: Do not resuscitate orders: *IJME*, July-Aug. 2006 and responses: “The team had no options”, “Guiding light at the end of the tunnel’.
- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 2, Chapter 1 Section F: End of life decisions, Section G: Patients’ rights.

### Assessment

- Formative: Students’ response to the questions given for discussion in the group work.
- Summative: Short answer questions (SAQs) and MCQs in the final examination.

## Core Topic 4: Ethical issues and dilemmas

### Lesson5: Ethical challenges faced by medical students

**Duration:** One hour

#### Overall Objective

The aim of this session is to draw students’ attention to the ethical issues raised by their presence in the clinical and community health care setting so that potential sources of unethical conduct are minimized.

## Specific objectives

The students will be able to:

- List the roles and responsibilities of medical students towards patients.
- Describe the potential sources of unethical conduct due to the presence of medical students in the health care setting: sharing of highly confidential information regarding patients, patients' expectations of care from students and their inability to provide, patients' involving students to advocate their cause at the risk of treating physicians' displeasure.
- Describe the measures to mitigate or avoid unethical conduct.
- Identify the potential sources of unethical conduct employed by students in their learning and examination and mechanisms to prevent them.

## Teaching methods

- Teachers' presentation: Describing the situation regarding students' involvement in patient care.
- Brainstorming: to identify the potential sources of unethical conduct.
- Discussion around a case scenario illustrating the ethical concerns raised by the presence of students in the clinical care setting.

## Teaching aids

- Ethical challenges faced by medical students, *WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics, Part 2, Chapter 7*.
- A Goel and P Agrawal: Making choices in emergency room, *IJME* July–Sept. 2006.

## Assessment

- Formative: Level of students' interaction to the group tasks.

## Core Topic 5: Ethical issues and dilemmas

### Lesson 6: Ethical dilemmas in dealing with the pharmaceutical industry and providers of medical technology facility and privatization of health care.

**Duration:** One hour

#### *Overall objective*

The overall objective of this session is to help the students to develop sensitivity to ethical issues while dealing with the pharmaceutical industry and other providers of medical technology. In addition, the objective of this session is to familiarize the students with potential advantages and disadvantages of health care in the private sector and the measures to minimize the disadvantages of health care in the private sector.

#### *Specific Objectives*

- Describe the relationship between doctors and the pharmaceutical and medical technology industry.
- List the potential sources of unethical conduct in the doctor-industry relationship.
- List the reasons why doctors need to be careful when interacting with industry.
- Discuss the ethical and legal criteria in promotion and advertising of medicinal drugs and devices.
- Discuss the doctors' role and responsibility in dealing with inappropriate promotion practices and requests by the pharmaceutical industry.
- Discuss issues of access to private health care including insurance.
- Discuss the ethical concerns related to doctors working both in public and private health institutions.
- Describe the characteristics of health care in the private sector and the constraints in meeting the needs of people who can not afford their health services.

- List the dilemmas facing a doctor working both in the public and the private sector.
- Identify measures to prevent dual loyalty to the detriment of the patient.

### Teaching methods

- The teacher to introduce the subject: the pharmaceutical and medical devices industry, their commercial interests and positive role in patient care, their approaches in promoting their products and how doctors are involved in this process.
- Brainstorming session to identify the potential sources of unethical conduct.
- Group work: identify the ethical dilemmas faced by providers of private health services.
- Group discussion to identify the advantages and disadvantages of health care in the private sector and to suggest measures to minimize the disadvantages.

### Teaching aids

- Relationship with pharmaceutical and health industry, *WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics, Part 2 Chapter 8.*
- Ethical issues related with health care in the private sector, *WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics, Part 2, Chapter 9.*
- Editorial: Who rules great Indian Bazar? *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, Jan.- March 2004.
- N.Roy, N.Madhiwala, SA Pai. Drug promotional practices in Mumbai: a qualitative study: *IJME* April-June 2007.

### Assessment

- Formative: Students' participation in the brainstorming session and the response to the tasks given for the group work.
- Summative: SAQs in the final examination in clinical pharmacology.

## Core topic 6: Reproductive health

### Lesson 7: Ethical issues in reproductive health

**Duration:** One hour

#### *Overall objective*

The objective of the session is to help the students to develop an awareness of the issues of ethical concern in reproductive health and identify mechanisms to resolve them in consultation with the clients of reproductive health services.

#### *Specific objectives*

- List the ethical issues in relation to termination of pregnancy as forwarded by advocates of “pro-life” and “pro-choice” camps.
- Discuss the situation with regard to termination of pregnancy as permitted by the law of the country.
- Discuss the legal and ethical implications of promotion of temporary and permanent methods of contraception.
- Discuss ethical disputes associated with assisted reproductive technologies.

#### *Teaching methods*

- Brief introduction of the subject by the facilitator.
- Debate: Students to debate in two groups for and against the right to terminate pregnancy.
- Students to debate for or against the availability of contraceptives freely or only on sanction from authorities or health institutions.
- Students to debate for and against the availability of assisted reproductive technology in countries struggling with rising population and declining natural resources.
- Teacher to sum up by highlighting the ethical issues at the end of the session.

## Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 2, Chapter 10: Ethical issues related to reproductive health: issues of beginning of life.
- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics*, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 92-98.
- Sherif and Sherif: Interventions in reproduction in *IJME*, July-Sept. 2006.

## Assessment

- Formative: Students' response and participation in the debate.
- Summative: SAQs in the final examination of obstetrics and gynaecology.

# Core topic 7: Patients with HIV/AIDS

## Lesson 8: Ethical aspects of treating patients with HIV/ AIDS

**Duration:** One hour

### Overall objectives

The overall objective of the session is to help the students to develop a familiarity with the prevalent practices in access and availability of health care services to patients with HIV/AIDS which are against ethical principles and enable them to practice ethically while dealing with such patients.

### Specific objectives

- Describe the current difficulties faced by patients with HIV/AIDS in accessing health care services.
- List the unethical practices in provision of health services to patients with HIV/AIDS.
- Describe ethical aspects of notification and patient tracing.
- Describe the correct practice of testing for HIV/AIDS in patient care and screening.

### Teaching methods

- The teacher to describe the historical perspectives in identification and treatment of HIV/AIDS.
- Students to share their knowledge or experience: anecdotes or stories they have read in newspapers or magazines regarding mistreatment of patients with HIV/AIDS.
- Students to discuss in groups about why AIDS is being treated differently when it comes to screening for diagnosis and managed as a public health problem.

### Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 2, Chapter 11: Ethical aspects of treating patients with HIV/AIDS.
- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics*, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 64-71.
- The statement of World Medical Association on HIV/AIDS and the medical profession: *IJME* April-June 2007.
- Omar Swartz: Access to AIDS medicine: ethical considerations, *IJME*, July-Sept. 2004.
- Editorial: Government funded antiretroviral therapies for HIV/AIDS- new ethical challenges: *IJME* July-Sept. 2004.

### Assessment

- Summative: Students' response to tasks given in the group work.
- Formative: SAQs in final examination in internal medicine and in the clinical examination.

## Specific topic 1: Genetics and health care

### Lesson 9: Ethical aspects of genetics

**Duration:** One hour

## Overall objective

The overall objective of this session is to help the learners to provide genetic services and ethical counseling in organ transplantation in an ethical manner.

## Specific objectives

- List the potential situations in which genetic screening is desirable.
- List the potential sources of harm of genetic screening.
- Demonstrate skills to counsel the patients or caregivers of patients suffering from genetic disorders.

## Teaching methods

- Brief presentation by the teacher to highlight the current practices of screening for genetic disorders.
- Brainstorming: students to identify the potential benefits and harm involved in genetic screening.
- Group discussion: debate on desirability of cloning and stem cell research.

## Teaching Aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 3, Chapter 1: Ethical aspects of genetics.
- Schmitz D, Wiesing U: Just a family history: *BMJ* 2006; 332: 297-299.
- S. Nandakumar: The cloning controversy, *IJME* July-Sept. 2006.

## Assessment

- Formative: Students' participation in brainstorming and group discussion.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination: anatomy, obstetrics and paediatrics.

## Specific topic 2: Organ donation and transplantation

### Lesson 10: Ethical aspects of transplantation/ organ donation

**Duration:** one hour

#### Overall objectives

The overall objective of this session is to familiarize the students with the ethical issues involved in transplantation and organ donation practices.

#### Specific objectives

- List the conditions requiring human organ transplantation and organ donation.
- List the potential harm involved in transplantation and organ donation.
- Identify the measures to avoid harm to all concerned in organ transplantation/ donation.
- Describe the national legal provisions regarding organ donation and transplantation.

#### Teaching methods

- Presentation on legal provisions on organ donation and transplantation.
- Brainstorming by students to list the situations regarding organ donation.
- Group work to identify the potential breach of ethics in organ donation and transplantation.

#### Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics Part 3, Chapter 2: Ethics of transplantation/ organ donation.
- Deceased-donor kidney transplantation in Iran: trends, barriers and opportunities: *IJME*, April-June 2007.

## ***Assessment***

- Formative: Students' level of participation in brainstorming and group work session.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination in general surgery.

# **Specific topic 3: Ethics and mental health**

## **Lesson 11: Ethical issues in treating a patient with mental illness**

**Duration:** One hour: theory class

Two hours in the ward

## ***Overall objectives***

The overall objective of the session is to familiarize the students with the ethical issues in providing mental health services.

## ***Specific objectives***

- Describe the differences between general and mental health care.
- List the potential harm inherent in mental health care and research.
- Identify the mechanisms to avoid the harm identified in 2 above.

## ***Teaching methods***

- Teachers' presentation about the nature of mental health.
- Brainstorming on potential harm in mental health care and research.
- Group work to identify measures to promote ethical mental health care and research.

## ***Teaching aids***

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 3, Chapter 3: Ethical aspects of teaching mentally ill.

- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 72-83.*
- Wig NN: Ethical issues in psychiatry, *IJME* July-Sept. 2004.

### **Clinical demonstration**

Discussion around a patient's problems in psychiatry and drug de-addiction ward.

### **Assessment**

- Formative: Level of student participation in brain storming and group work.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination in psychiatry.

## **Specific topic 4: Ethics and child care**

### **Lesson 12: Ethical issues in child care**

**Duration:** One hour for theory

Two hours for discussion around patients

### **Overall objectives**

The overall objective of these sessions is to familiarize the students with different ethical issues in providing health care to children and in research involving children so that they will be prepared to provide ethical child health services.

### **Specific objectives**

- Describe the differences between children and adults and in the provision of health care services to them.
- List the potential sources of harm in providing child health services.

- List the potential harm in conducting research involving children.
- Identify the measures to promote interests of students in providing child health services.
- Identify the provisions made by ethical committees that review research proposals in relation to research involving children.

### *Teaching methods*

- Teachers' presentation on differences between adults and children and dependence of children on their parents or care givers.
- Brainstorming among students to identify the potential sources of unethical conduct in child care and research in child health.
- Group work to identify the measures to promote ethical child health care and research.

### *Teaching aid*

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 3, Chapter 4: Ethical issues in treating children.

### *Assessment*

- Formative: Level of students' participation in brainstorming and group work.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination in paediatrics
- Clinical round for discussion of ethics: Two hours
- Illustrative cases (for example)
- A moribund malnourished child's parents want to take the child home due to family problems.
- An infant with hydrocephalus advised by a paediatrician not to seek further help.
- Father of a child with leukaemia wants to take the child home as he thinks he can not afford the treatment.

## Specific topic 5: Public health and health promotion

### Lesson 13: Ethics in public health and health promotion, resource allocation, equity and social justice

**Duration:** One hour for theory and two hours for case-based discussion.

#### *Overall objectives*

The overall objective of this session is to familiarize the students with the ethical issues of concern in public health programmes so that they can identify the possible infringement of ethical principles and take measures to avoid them. In addition, the students will become aware of the potential sources of inequity in health care and the measures to promote equity and social justice so that they can promote equitable resource allocation.

#### *Specific objectives*

- List the common public health promotional activities and interventions.
- Identify the possible infringement of ethical principles in these activities.
- Identify potential sources of breach of ethical principles in providing public health services to groups at special risk.
- Identify measures to avoid the infringement of ethical principles in the practice of public health, health promotion and family medicine.
- List the public health duties of a doctor.
- Define equity in health.
- List the potential sources of inequity in health care provision.
- Demonstrate an attitude of equality in dealing with patients irrespective of caste, gender, age, religion, ethnicity and political affiliations etc.
- Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues related to resource allocation

## Teaching methods

- Teacher's presentation listing the activities in public health with a potential for breach of ethical principles.
- Brainstorming to identify the potential breach of ethical principles in these activities.
- Group work around cases to suggest measures to avoid the breach of ethical principles.

## Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 2, Chapter 2: Equality and social justice; Part 3, Chapter 5: Resource allocation; Part 3 Chapter 6: Ethics of public health and health promotion.
- T.Jacob John: Human rights and public health during pandemic influenza: *IJME* Jan-March 2006.
- Bashir Mamdani: Social hierarchy of health: *IJME* April-June 2007.
- National demographic survey and Annual Reports of DHS (to highlight the inequity in health statistics and services between urban and rural population and different socioeconomic groups).
- A Goel and P Agrawal: Making choices in emergency room: *IJME* July Sept 2006.
- Shikha Jain: documentary "Health Matters": People's voice on justice, equity and health care in India (contact: [shikhaj@vsnl.com](mailto:shikhaj@vsnl.com)).
- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics*, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 44-63.

## Assessment

- Formative: Students' participation in the brainstorming sessions and group work. Pre-test and post-test questionnaires.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination of community medicine

## Specific topic 6: Alternative systems of medicine and country-specific situations

### Lesson 14: Ethical issues of dealing with other systems of medicine and country-specific situations of ethical concern

**Duration:** One hour

#### Overall objectives

The overall objective of this session is to enable the learners to deal effectively in resolving the conflicts arising from the use of alternative systems of medicine.

#### Specific objectives

- List the different systems of medical care available.
- Identify the role of a practitioner of one system in relation to other systems.
- Identify the potential breaches of ethical principles in dealing with a different system of medicine.
- Identify the measures to prevent the breach of ethical principles in dealing with another system of medical care.
- Identify a country-specific situation raising an ethical concern.
- Discuss the methods to resolve the country-specific situation.

#### Teaching methods

- Teacher's presentation: introduction to different systems of medicine prevalent in the country.
- Brainstorming: How should one deal with a patient who is receiving care under a different system of care?
- Group discussion: How to deal with drugs from another system of medicine?

#### Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 3, Chapter 7: Ethical issues of dealing with other systems of medicine; Part 3: Chapter 8: Country-specific situations.

- *Health Ethics in South Asia Volume 4: Teaching health ethics, Resource materials from the WHO SEA Region, WHO SEARO New Delhi 2005 pp: 41.*
- Valiathan MS: Bioethics and Ayurveda: *IJME*, Jan.-March 2008.

### **Assessment**

- Formative: Students' participation in brainstorming and group work.
- Summative: SAQs in final examination of community medicine.

## **Specific topic 7: Research ethics**

### **Lesson 15: Principles of research and publication ethics**

**Duration:** one hour

#### **Overall objectives**

The overall objective of this session is to enable the students to follow ethical principles in the conduct and publication of research.

#### **Specific objectives**

- Define health research.
- List the activities in health research.
- List ethical theories and ethical principles pertaining to research.
- Describe the salient features of national ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.
- Identify the possible sources of breach of ethical principles in conducting and reporting research.
- List the mechanisms for promoting ethical research.
- Identify potential sources of unethical conduct in dissemination of research such as plagiarism, fabrication of data, duplicate publication and gift authorships.

## Teaching methods

- Teachers' presentation about health and health research, activities involved in research involving human participants, ethical principles etc.
- Brainstorming: how research activities can breach ethical principles?
- Group work:
  - How to promote ethical research?
  - Identify instances of breach of ethical principles in the given research.

## Teaching aids

- WHO Handbook of Medical Ethics: Part 4, Chapter 1: Principles of research ethics and research publications.
- National ethical guidelines for review of research involving human participants.
- Henry K. Beecher: Ethics and clinical research: *The New England Journal of Medicine*, Volume 274 (1966); 367-372.

## Assessment

- Formative: Students' level of participation in the brainstorming session and group work, (Pre- and post-test questionnaire in the orientation sessions for "Community Diagnosis" in Nepal).
- Summative: SAQs in the final examination of community medicine.

**Total duration:** 16 hours for theory and an additional two hours for ward or community-based discussion: 20 hours.



An expert group meeting to review and finalize the Handbook and Facilitators' Guide on Medical Ethics was organized by the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (WHO/SEARO) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 27-30 October 2009. Experts in teaching of ethics from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Sri Lanka participated in the meeting and reviewed the two documents namely, the Handbook and the Facilitators' Guide. These two documents have been developed at the recommendation of the Second Meeting of the Network of Medical Councils of the South-East Asia Region held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in November 2008. The Facilitators' Guide has been prepared to help in teaching medical ethics to undergraduate medical students according to the curriculum developed by WHO/SEARO and endorsed by the network of medical councils of the Region.



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