EVERYDAY NURSING ETHICS

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Nursing Ethics (with I. E. Thompson and K. M. Boyd)

Learning and Working: the occupational socialization of nurses

EVERYDAY NURSING ETHICS

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First published 1989
Reprinted 1991

Published by
MACMILLAN EDUCATION LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

Typeset by Wessex Typesetters
(Division of The Eastern Press Ltd)
Frome, Somerset

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Melia, Kath M.

Everyday nursing ethics.

1. Medicine, Nursing. Ethical aspects

I. Title

174'.2

ISBN 978-0-333-47152-4 ISBN 978-1-349-10399-7 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-10399-7

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Introduction	1
1 To lie or not to lie?	4
2 Measuring freedom	10
3 Cruel to be kind?	16
4 Whose morals are they anyway?	22
5 Balance of power	28
6 Whose side are you on?	34
7 Justice for all	40
8 The search for objectivity	45
9 An easy death?	51
10 Acts of faith	59
11 To tell or not to tell	65
12 Ethics in context	72
Further reading	81
Index	83

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author and publisher wish to thank *Nursing Times* for permission to reproduce articles which appeared originally in the journal within the Series 'Everyday Ethics for Nurses'.

PREFACE

As a practical introduction to nursing ethics *Everyday Nursing Ethics* is for both nursing students and qualified nurses. It takes a case-based approach to a range of issues which confront all nurses and challenges them to think about the ethical dimension of their work. Nurses working in daily clinical contact with patients should be able to identify with at least some of the cases and so be able to use the book within their practice rather than viewing ethics as some kind of ivory tower philosophical discussion which does not relate to practice. Nursing students will find the book a stimulating resource which sets theory firmly into practical settings.

Each chapter deals with an important issue. In a brief and readable way it introduces the relevant ethical theory which is then developed so that the reader can build up an understanding of the different arguments that have been put forward by key moral philosophers in order to justify particular moral stances. These arguments are illustrated by relating them directly to a case so that the reader can see how ethical debate works. The cases quoted are, for the most part, not the dramatic ethical dilemmas; rather they are about the everyday realities which nurses face when ethical decisions are being taken or have been taken. So the book is not about 'do we turn off the machine?' but more about 'what are the implications for nurses in a personal and professional sense when the machine is turned off?'

It is important to realise that the book is *not* about deciding what is right and wrong in nursing practice. Each of us is entitled to a position and so no one should be excluded from voicing an opinion – this is the essence of true ethical debate. However, discussion is likely to be more constructive if we have a clear idea about how to

put arguments together, and an insight into the reasoning behind the moral positions we take.

The book is designed for use by individual nurses or as a basis for ward or classroom-based group discussion. Each chapter includes points for discussion; an annotated bibliography at the end of the book will enable readers to take the issues further.