

Ethics for Mental Health Professionals

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Below is a sample of topics that Dr. Gillette has presented on during the past several years. He can always design a workshop to suit the needs of your organization.

Leadership Ethics and Moral Management

Description: This highly interactive session will provide an introduction to leadership and business ethics issues. After discussing basic concepts of leadership ethics, and reviewing the most common sources of ethical confusion, we will review strategies for creating an organizational environment of ethics.

Objectives:

1. To examine the source of ethical obligation within an organizational structure.
2. To review the process by which leadership ethics issues can be identified, analyzed and resolved.
3. To discuss, specifically, the role of managers within an organizational structure by considering the potential ethical conflicts between duty to the organization and the duty to support supervisees.

The Ethics of Social Networking and Electronic Communication

Description: This highly interactive seminar will consider a series of ethical issues that emerge when clients and providers communicate by electronic means and engage social networking technologies. We will examine this topic as it relates to considerations of provider-recipient trust, boundaries, confidentiality and responsiveness. In attending this session, participants will have the opportunity to analyze the impact of modern communication and record keeping technologies on ethical assumptions.

Objectives:

1. Review basic concepts of confidentiality and apply those concepts to new information and documentation technologies.
2. Define the concept of inappropriate dual relationships and apply that concept to social networking interactions.
3. Identify conditions under which breaches of confidentiality are ethically permissible or obligatory.
4. Examine ethical issues associated with new systems of clinical record keeping and client access.

The Ethics of Gender, Sex and Sexuality

Description: This highly interactive session will review a series of ethical issues surrounding gender, sex and sexuality. We will discuss ethical concepts and study specific case studies involving topics such as placement issues, truthfulness issues, autonomy issues, staff member's personal values and comfort, and new challenges presented by recent legal changes regarding same sex couples.

Objectives:

1. To discuss the ethical implications posed by services that are offered to gay, lesbian and transgender patients.
2. To examine the ethical demands that are placed on the provider-recipient relationship when dealing with sexuality.
3. To consider the ethics of sexuality activity as it relates to mental health services.

The Ethics of Confidentiality

Description: This highly interactive seminar will review ethical issues that arise in the provision of developmental services, mental health services, and substance abuse services specifically as they relate to the ethical limits of confidentiality. Topics will include the theoretical basis for confidentiality claims, confidentiality and the duty to warn, and confidentiality and dual relationships. After a general discussion of the concept of clinical privacy, real-life case studies will be used to examine specific difficult challenges.

Objectives:

1. To provide a philosophical understanding of the value of clinical confidentiality.
2. To examine the conflict between respect for client confidentiality and the duty to disclose information for the avoidance of harm.
3. To examine the special problems of confidentiality that emerge when multiple relationships exist.
4. To improve the abilities of those in attendance to recognize the key ethical issues in these cases, analyze them and develop rational and ethical resolutions.

Case Studies in Behavioral Healthcare Ethics

Description: This highly interactive seminar will introduce attendees to a pragmatic method of dealing with the most common types of ethical issues that emerge in behavioral health. After reviewing a practical method for identifying, analyzing and resolving relevant ethical issues, we will apply that method to a series of real-life case studies.

Objectives:

1. To introduce a practical method for resolving clinical ethics issues in the behavioral health field.
2. To review ethical concepts as they relate to case studies developed by the attendees. Topics are likely to include, but will not be limited to, paternalism and the limits of client autonomy, boundaries and dual relationships, professional integrity and disagreements among providers, patients and surrogate decision makers.
3. To demonstrate the strategies that can be used to resolve these cases.

Professional Boundaries and Clinical Ethics

Description: This highly interactive seminar will present an overview of ethical issues that develop when providers and recipients fail to recognize professional boundaries. By examining real-life ethics case consultation cases, we will explore key concepts and generate a better understanding of the relationship between healthcare personnel and the individuals whom they serve.

Objectives:

1. To define professional boundaries and dual relationships in an ethically useful way.
2. To explore difficult cases where boundary crossings are difficult to identify or avoid.
3. To demonstrate tools and policies that can be of use in avoiding inappropriate boundary crossings.

Budgeting Ethics

Description: This highly-interactive seminar will provide an introduction to some of the most interesting and difficult ethical issues in the provision of services in an environment of scarce financial resources. We will demonstrate a practical approach to ethical reasoning that can be applied to a variety of sub-topics including prioritization and micro-allocation, macro-allocation and budgeting across service areas, and ethical issues regarding non-payment and no-shows. This session will provide a case-based discussion of relevant moral issues.

Objectives:

1. To identify the key ethical values that impact decisions about the distribution of scarce resources.
2. To demonstrate a practical algorithm for making allocation decisions.
3. To define the ethical implications of individual choice and responsibility.

Ethical Issues in Medication Management

Description: Participants in this highly interactive session will have the opportunity to analyze a series of ethics case studies involving medication use in mental health services. We will consider problems posed by unreliable patient history, suspicion of drug diversion or misuse, and concerns about individuals who engage in drug seeking behavior.

Objectives:

1. To review the ethical aspects of the provider-recipient relationship as it pertains to medication management.
2. To identify ethical issues that develop when providers suspect that patients are misusing medications.
3. To discuss case studies involving dangerous client behavior that could be exacerbated by the provision of medications.

Ethics in Long Term Care

This highly interactive ethics seminar will begin with an introduction to key strategies for identifying, analyzing and resolving ethical issues as they arise in the clinical setting. We will then review some of the most interesting and difficult ethical issues that emerge in the provision of long term care services including concepts of autonomy, family control and professional responsibility. We will concentrate on the ethical implications of disagreement among staff, family and residents surrounding medication management and the refusal of indicated clinical services.

Objectives:

1. To provide a practical process for ethical decision making in the clinical setting.
2. To review the concepts of autonomy, paternalism, and distributive justice.
3. To clarify possible responses to the multi-faceted ethical conflict between an individual's right to make potentially dangerous decisions, a family's desire to control services, and staff's obligation to protect individuals from harm.

The Impact of Personal Values on Serving Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

Description: This highly interactive, case-based seminar will explore ethical issues that emerge when the personal values of providers come into conflict with the needs and desires of individuals served. We will review information concerning staff refusal to partake in objectionable activity, staff desire to protect individuals from harm, and disagreements between providers and family members.

Objectives:

1. To define the conditions under which staff members may ethically refuse to engage in objectionable activities and when they must engage in objectionable activities regardless of personal values.
2. To define and apply the concept of ethically justifiable paternalism.
3. To consider the impact of person centered planning on relevant issues.

Ethical Issues in Documentation and Communication

Description: This highly interactive session will provide an introduction to ethical issues that develop as clients and staff introduce new methods of communication and documentation into community mental health settings. We will consider issues that arise out of electronic communication technologies and electronic record keeping. We will examine how our existing attitudes about ethics can be applied to these emerging areas of concern.

Objectives:

1. To examine the ethics of interacting with clients by new technological means such as social networking sites.
2. To review ethical expectations for documentation and consider how those values impact electronic record keeping.
3. To develop an understanding of the ethical similarities and differences between old methods of documentation and new electronic records.

Ethical Issues in Providing ID and ASD Services

This highly interactive, case-based session will provide attendees with an opportunity to discuss a variety of ethical issues related to providing services to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. Case studies will cover topics such as balancing the demands of a variety of provider agencies, families and individuals served. We will consider the ethical implications of individual choice, the role of FAP Teams, the demands of schools systems and satisfying payer expectations.

Objectives:

1. To examine the ethics of individual choice, person centered planning and pragmatic organizational demands.
2. To investigate the relationship between capacity and the dignity of risk.
3. To provide an ethical framework for adjudicating disagreements among individuals, their family members and providers.

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Ethical Issues in Pediatric I.D. Services

The provision of services to children and young adults with significant intellectual disabilities can be complex, and ethical issues often emerge in this challenging field. This interactive, case-based discussion will help attendees consider a series of ethical issues that they are likely to face as caring professionals including, but not limited to, dealing with burnout and emotional stress, managing professional boundaries, and responding to possible conflicts among individuals served, families, administrative demands, and the personal values of providers.

Objectives:

1. To review important concepts of ethics as they apply in the ID setting including autonomy and control.
2. To examine ethical responses to conflicts between staff members' personal values and their professional responsibilities with consideration of issues such as countertransference.
3. To clarify ethical responsibilities revolving around professional roles and boundaries.

Ethical Issues in Family and Foster Care Services

Description: This highly interactive, case based seminar will provide attendees with an opportunity to discuss a variety of ethical issues related to foster care services. We will begin by reviewing a practical approach to ethical analysis that will help the attendees better manage ethical issues that they encounter in their professional lives. We will then discuss a variety of case studies designed to highlight ethical issues such as professional boundaries, autonomy and risk, confidentiality and the management of competing interests and concerns among providers, family members and children.

Objectives:

1. To demonstrate a pragmatic technique to identify, analyze and resolve ethical issues.
2. To review the concepts of autonomy and capacity and to apply these concepts to person centered planning and the dignity of risk.
3. To define ethical issues involving boundaries and confidentiality and show how attention to these concepts can assist in the ethical resolution of practical issues.

Beyond the Video Conference: Ethical Issues in the Transformation of Provider-Recipient Interaction

Description: This highly interactive session will consider a series of ethical issues currently emerging as modes of communication and service provision change to embrace therapeutic encounters between physically separated individuals. We will examine a variety of ethical issues beginning with simple matters such as safety, licensing and billing, but then delve more deeply into the ethical implications of fundamental changes in how people communicate and interact. We will discuss boundary issues and social media and consider how acceptance of new modes of relationship building may impact clinical interactions.

The Ethics of Risk and Risk Assessment

This program will examine ethical issues that develop when managing and responding to risk. Discussion will include the dignity of risk, the power and limits of autonomy, the ethics of risk to harm self or others and provider responsibility.

Organizational Ethics Issues in MH Services: Marketing, Fundraising and the Use of Social Media

Description: This highly interactive discussion will consider a series of ethical issues that are associated with the provision of mental health services, primarily from the provider's perspective. Rather than considering cases involving treatment decisions for individuals served, we will concentrate on organizational and management issues. After examining some basic concepts in business ethics, we will apply those ideas to the mental health setting by considering issues including, but not limited to, organizational structures and relationships between colleagues, ethical issues in marketing and fundraising, and the organizational and individual staff member use of social media.

Objectives:

4. To review important concepts in business ethics regarding the producer-consumer relationship.
5. To examine specific ethical issues arising from the use of social networking platforms.
6. To consider whether or not marketing healthcare services presents special ethical considerations beyond those that might attach to other commodities and services.