Everyday ethics as a foundation for everyday practice

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NZAOT Clinical Workshops 2011

The purpose of this workshop is to firm up the foundation for practitioners’ ethical decision-making.

It aims to illuminate the sometimes taken-for-granted moral context of everyday practice and provide a user-friendly way of reasoning through ethically challenging situations.
The Process

- Demystifying ethics and the moral domain of practice;
- Uncovering real, everyday situations that matter to practitioners;
- Using Seedhouse’s ethical grid to think through ethically challenging situations in practice;
- Considering the Code of Ethics for Occupational Therapists as a guide to everyday ethics in practice;
- Reaching and articulating ethically defensible decisions; and
- Exploring ways to make ethical reasoning a foundation for everyday practice.

Introductions

- Name
- Area of work
- Why you chose this workshop
What is ethics?

- “refers to moral philosophy and the study of what should, or should not, be done in order to have a peaceful society” (Freegard, 2007, p. 31).
- “is concerned with how society balances the rights and responsibilities of individuals and collectives in order to live within sustainable resources” (Freegard, 2007, p. 31).
- “is concerned about what is right, fair, just or good; and about what we ought to do, not just about what is the case or what is most acceptable or expedient” (Preston, 2001, p. 18).

“Ethics refers to moral philosophy and the study of what should, or should not, be done in order to have a peaceful society” (Freegard, 2007, p. 31).

- Moral philosophy is simply the study of how we should act as we go about our day in practice
- Acting in ways that promotes harmonious relationships within practice teams and with clients and their families
“Ethics is concerned with how society balances the rights and responsibilities of individuals and collectives in order to live within sustainable resources” (Freegard, 2007, p. 31).

- You have responsibilities toward, clients, their communities of interest, and to teams, to employers, to funders etc
- Your clients have the right to be treated in a way that is respectful and fair

“Ethics is concerned about what is right, fair, just or good; and about what we ought to do, not just about what is the case or what is most acceptable or expedient” (Preston, 2001, p. 18).

- An obligation to take numerous influences into account when deciding how to act; this might include health & health consumer laws, policies, budgets, funder expectations, as well as your client’s uniqueness & humanity
What are some of the practice situations that trouble you; the things that keep you awake at night?

“Emotion affects our thinking and, when feeling is recognized and acknowledged, thinking can be more free and authentic and, accordingly, moral imagination and moral conversation may both be enhanced” (Noddings, 1998, p. 135).
Respect persons equally
Create autonomy
Respect autonomy
Serve needs first
Keep promises
Minimise harm

Most beneficial outcome for the patient
Most beneficial outcome for a particular group
Most benefit for society
Most benefit for oneself

Resources available
Effectiveness & efficiency of action

Wishes of others
The law

Most positive good
Tell the truth

Do most positive good
Respect autonomy
Serve needs first
Minimise harm

Codes of practice
Degree of certainty of the evidence on which action is taken

The risk
1. Describe the particulars of the scenario
2. Ask an ethics question
3. ‘Consider’ the grid, defining the meaning & relative weighting of the boxes selected
4. Make a reasoned decision (answer your Q)


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**Group feedback**

- Briefly describe your scenario
- State the ethics question you considered
- Overview the boxes that underpinned your ethical reasoning
- State your answer, that is, what ‘you’ ought to have done
What things do you already do?

What can you do to make ethics a foundation for everyday practice when you get back to work?

References


Comments and Questions