

COVID-19 Ethical Dilemma Arises

As nurses you are supposed to follow the ANA code of ethics. You come into this field for the passion of helping others get better, and you do what it takes. According to the ANA code of ethics, nurses are to provide a collective effort amongst other healthcare providers and individually, to establish, maintain and improve the ethical environment of the work setting that remains conducive to providing safe quality healthcare. Unfortunately, when the global pandemic COVID-19 started, this was near impossible for some nurses. Nurses found themselves in an ethical crisis due to the safety of the nurses, patients, co-workers, and families, allocation of scarce resources, and the changing nature of the relationships of nurses with patients and families during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yildirim & Kocatepe, 2022). All of this has caused nurses to have feelings such as stigmatization, fear, anger, anxiety, uncertainty, work-related strain, and burnout (Yildirim & Kocatepe, 2022). Supplies were limited, staffing was minimal, patient load was high, everyone was scared, and licenses were at risk due to all these feelings and safety issues arising daily. Nurses during this time could not maintain the ethical environment or provide safe care under some of these terrible circumstances. A lot of lives were lost due to the unknown and nature of the disease and nurses could not improve the work setting and follow this code of ethics. They were just trying to get by. According to the article I chose, 52.7% of the nurses reported facing an ethical dilemma, and 40.3% of the nurses who had an ethical dilemma during the pandemic failed to solve it (Yildirim & Kocatepe, 2022). Since the pandemic started, we are still trying to follow the code of ethics and improve the clinical environment again to make it conducive to safe quality healthcare. Associations are working hard, as are the healthcare teams. Some places though there are still staffing shortages, ratios

are high, and nurses are reporting that nursing isn't what it once was. I am eager to get out into the nursing world and follow this code of ethics for nursing and help a tiny bit with the staffing shortage. I know nursing will never be the same due to the ethical dilemma COVID-19 has caused, however I am hopeful for the best in my new career.

Reference:

Yildirim, D, Kocatepe, V. Professional values and ethical sensitivities of nurses in COVID-19 pandemic. *Nurs Forum*. 2022; 57: 1111- 1119. [doi:10.1111/nuf.12797](https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12797)