

### Current Issues in Nursing Ethics

The American Nurses Association (ANA) lists nine points which are meant to serve as a guide for nurses and the nursing profession. Out of the nine points listed, one especially stood out to me due to recent challenges faced in healthcare. The sixth point states, “The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth” (ANA, 2015). I believe the COVID-19 pandemic created a variety of challenges for health care workers. A few of the examples I personally witnessed include reuse of single-use personal protective equipment, increased demand on staff such as working overtime weekly for months often leading to fatigue and burnout, and greater difficulty balancing the need for efficiency while preserving quality of care. Authors Dellasega and Kanaskie also raised concern towards this in a 2021 study which sought to discover nurses’ input toward the relevance of the Code of Ethics during the pandemic. The studies’ findings did identify differences in the perceived degree of relevance between each principle of the Code of Ethics. It also found something unexpected, which was that each of the nurses who participated in the study independently reported significant feelings of guilt throughout the pandemic. In each case, the guilt was attributed to the nurses’ desire to contribute more, despite overtime hours worked and other shows of support throughout that period. I find this interesting because it shows that even though challenges were faced, and health and safety compromised at times, the statements of these nurses showcases a desire to maintain competency, wholeness of character and integrity, and aims to excel beyond what was expected of them, all of which relate back to principles outlined in the Code of Ethics (Dellasega & Kanaskie, 2021).

### References

American Nurses Association. (2015). Code of ethics for nurses. American Nurses Publishing.

Dellasega, C., & Kanaskie, M. L. (2021). Nursing ethics in an era of pandemic. *Applied nursing research* : ANR, 62, 151508. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnr.2021.151508>