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Z-Chapter 19  
ANA Code of Ethics Reflection

A current ethical issue that I have had experience with throughout my ICU clinical is focused on a patient's code status. There have been many issues where the family has gone against what a person has written in their living will or where a patient has been intubated with a code status of do not intubate. This correlates with the code of ethics that talks about advocating for and protecting the rights, health, and safety of the patient. A nurse holds the role of an advocate to stick up for their patients and be a voice for them when they need it. According to a study, "Patients are usually vulnerable in the clinical setting due to either lack of education and the severity of their illness or fear due to terminal conditions. Advocacy allows nurses to defend and promote patients' rights and interests in such situations and gives benefits of empowerment of patients, positive health outcome" (Nsiah, 2019). Part of advocating for a patient is discussing their code status with them and their family. It is important to involve their family because they need to understand the patient's wishes and respect them. If they do not agree with their wishes, then they potentially could go against them because their feelings don't align. It is also important to share these wishes with their healthcare providers so they can be formally documented and known for future situations. The nurses must know their patient's code status to ensure their wishes are met and make other healthcare workers involved aware. The issue with the family not respecting wishes could have been prevented if the family had sat down and discussed this. After that patient was intubated, the nurses tried to communicate with the family member to help him understand and eventually, he realized what he had done. The nurse played an important role for their patient when they were unable to speak to their family. The other issue involving the intubated patient with the do not intubate status, the nurses were there to calm the patient and help her and the family understand that since she was already intubated, they were going to leave it in till she was getting better. Nurses have a significant role to play when it comes to communicating with their patient and their families. The codes of ethics work as a guide for us to follow when providing care to our patients and making sure they are receiving safe and quality healthcare.

Reference:

Nsiah, C., Siakwa, M., & Ninnoni, J. P. K. (2019). Registered Nurses' description of patient advocacy in the clinical setting. *Nursing open*, 6(3), 1124–1132.  
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