

Z-CH 19 Dylan Wilson

An ethical dilemma that is current and related to nursing is giving pain medications to patients who seem to be “drug seeking”. Such as a co-worker saying you shouldn’t give them any drugs, but you think it's the right thing to do as the patient's nurse. My primary commitment as a nurse needs to be the patient. This means advocating for their well-being, even when others may have biases or other thoughts. Pain is subjective, and it is not my decision to judge whether a patient’s pain is real or “exaggerated.” I still need assess their condition, and provide compassionate, evidence-based care like it’s their first time coming into the hospital because that's how everyone should be treated. Not administering pain medication only because a suspicion of drug-seeking behavior goes against the principle of patient advocacy and beneficence. While concerns about drug misuse may be correct, we should first take the steps to validate the suspicion by addressing it properly. This should include proper assessment, alternative pain management, and possible referrals to addiction specialists rather than straight denial of care. Ignoring a patient's pain can lead to unneeded suffering, break trust in healthcare providers, and go against ethical nursing practice. It will be my duty to prioritize the patient’s needs and treat them with respect. This dilemma requires looking at and balancing ethical principles with hospital policies, and professional nurse judgment. Open discussions with other healthcare members, using clinical guidelines, and seeking input from experienced health care providers can help address these ethical problems.

Citation

2025 code of ethics for Nurses Provision 2. 2025 Code of Ethics for Nurses. (American Nurse Association). Retrieved 28 February 2025. <https://codeofethics.ana.org/provision-2>.