

Core Curriculum

End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium

Module 4:
Ethical Issues in Palliative
Care Nursing



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Responding to Ethical Issues in Palliative Care

- **Ethical dilemmas on macro and micro levels emerge daily in palliative care**

Prince-Paul & Daly, 2010



Ethics Competencies in Nursing

- **Palliative care nurses play a critical role in legal/ethical issues**
- **Acquisition of knowledge, skill and core competencies for nurses**
- **Identification, evaluation, resolution of ethical issues**

ANA, 2001



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Standards of Professional Nursing Practice

- **Scope of practice & standards of care**
- **Codes of ethical conduct**
- **Guidance for responsible end-of-life/palliative practice**



Issues of Communication and Shared Decision Making

- **Disclosure**
- **Confidentiality**



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Issues of Communication and Shared Decision Making, cont.

- **Decision making capacity for marginalized groups**
 - **Patients with dementia/mental illness**
 - **Patients with developmental disabilities**
 - **Prisoners**

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Issues of Communication and Shared Decision Making, cont.

- **Advance care planning**
- **Patient Self-Determination Act**
- **Advance directives**

Wired for Life





Preventive Ethics

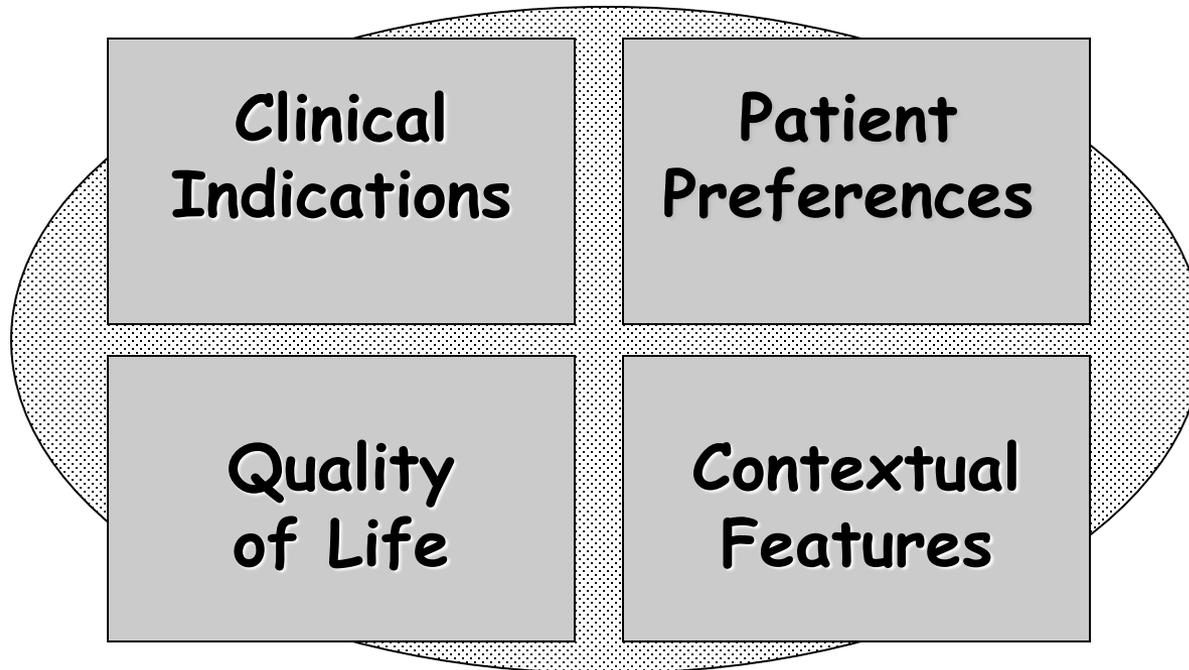
- **Nurses should focus efforts on preventing the occurrence of conflicts**
- **Early identification of issues**
- **Knowledge of the natural history of many illnesses**



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Facilitating Ethical and Legal Practice

The Four Box Method



Jonsen et al., 2006

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Quality of Life

- **Evaluation of prior QOL**
- **Expected QOL with and without treatment**
- **Common ethical dilemmas addressing QOL**



Conclusion

- **Ethical discernment, discourse, decision-making**
- **Address values and understanding of needs**
- **Advocate for patient/family rights**
- **Work closely with other disciplines**



Family in Waiting