

# Essential Resources for Nursing Education: A Comprehensive Guide for Success

Ethical issues are a critical component of nursing education. They require an awareness of ethical responsibilities, the ability to self-reflect on practice and the skills to develop ethics language and understanding.

Many students have observed nurses engage in unethical behaviors but remain silent due to a lack of confidence in reporting these incidents or fear of negative consequences. Faculty's perspectives on ethics in academic environments are understudied.

## Patient Privacy and Confidentiality

Patient privacy and confidentiality are a vital part of nursing. Nurses must never reveal a patient's information to anyone without their consent. They also must never discuss patients in public areas or over the phone or online. Violations can lead to serious legal and professional ramifications such as loss of a nursing license, a ruined career, or even patient harm or [NR 506 Week 7 Summary of Healthcare Concern Presentation](#).

All medical facilities have regulations, policies and procedures regarding the security of client records, including limiting access to information to those with a "need to know." Nurses must be knowledgeable about these rules and adhere to them at all times without exception.

There are a number of international and local news reports as well as anecdotal evidence that nurses have lost their jobs and even lost their licenses after posting inappropriate or confidential information on social media. The ANA's formal Code of Ethics sets goals and values for the nursing profession, which nurses must uphold at all [NR 447 Week 6 Performance Measurement PowerPoint](#) times.

## Patient Autonomy

In order to provide the highest level of care, nurses need to be able to understand patient needs and respond accordingly. Nurses often encounter ethical issues, which need to be addressed as soon as possible to prevent stress, burnout, or potentially professional and legal ramifications.

The concept of patient autonomy seems straightforward – patients should be allowed to choose their own treatment plans based on the knowledge they possess, provided that the healthcare team’s medical conscience permits them to do so. However, it can be helpful for nurses to think of autonomy not as a disembodied principle but rather as a matter of degrees: it is important to respect patients’ desires within the limits of the degree to which they are capable of understanding and rationally deliberating them.

Duquesne University’s MSN programs offer students the opportunity to explore these ethical issues through real-world case studies and simulations. This hands-on experience enables nurses to develop a deeper understanding of how ethical problems are resolved and how they can apply this knowledge to their own [NR 506 Week 2 Identification of Healthcare Policy Concern](#) nursing practice.

### **Educators’ Legal Obligations**

The American Nurses Association (ANA) has a formal code of ethics to guide nurses. The code provides guidelines that nursing professionals should follow to help protect patients, provide adequate staffing, advance decision-making, and ensure quality patient care.

The most important nursing ethical principle is non-maleficence, which states that nurses must act in their patients’ best interests. However, the principle can pose difficult challenges when a patient exercises their right to autonomy and refuses treatment or medication based on personal beliefs or cultural values.

Educators must also comply with laws and regulations regarding student privacy, health and safety, and employer policies when working with students. If a clinical nurse educator fails to offer proper supervision, leading to harm of a patient by the student, they could be charged with civil actions such as torts. Typically, tort cases involve negligence. (24)

### **Developing Professional Boundaries**

Nurses must be aware of the ways in which they may unintentionally blur professional boundaries. For instance, nursing students can unknowingly breach patient confidentiality or privacy by posting on social media about their work with patients. This could lead to a loss of employment, as well as potential [NR 501 Concept Analysis](#) consequences.

Maintaining professional boundaries also ensures that nurses are able to provide their patients with the care they need while in a level-headed, healthy state of mind. This is especially important when dealing with patients who are experiencing trauma, or making life-or-death decisions.

Developing and maintaining professional boundaries can be difficult in some cases, but nurses should keep in mind the formal Code of Ethics for Nurses that was developed by the American Nurses Association (ANA). For example, non-maleficence states that all patients have a right to be free from harm and nurses must use medical interventions that achieve this objective. This can be challenging when a patient refuses treatment due to cultural or personal ideologies

