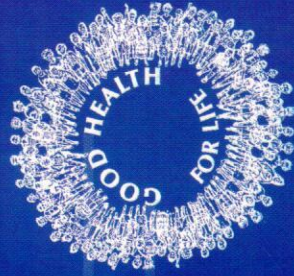


**NURSES &
MIDWIVES BOARD**

FIJI



**CODE OF ETHICS
&
CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR FIJI NURSES
1999**



DESIGN BY

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH, FIJI

FOREWORD

This code of ethics for nurses in Fiji has been developed by Fiji nurses for their general use.

There has never been a time in the history of nursing in Fiji when the need for this code is so great.

The development has been a lengthy process involving general awareness, submissions by nurses in the various health institutions, discussions by senior nurse managers, various working groups of selected nurses, comments on the draft by Nurses and Midwives Board Sub-committee and the comments on the draft by the Fiji Nursing Association (FNA).

The Nurses and Midwives Board, therefore recognises the vital contributions by the many nurses who had participated in the development of this code. The Board realises that the values expressed in the document are not exhaustive and therefore, the code needs to be reviewed regularly.

INTRODUCTION

Nursing practice takes place in a variety of settings. The setting may be affected to some extent by factors which are beyond a nurse's control or influence. These include resource constraints, socio-economic policies, management decisions, regulations and the practice of other health professionals.

Nurses also recognise the potential for conflict between individual needs, values, beliefs, differences and those of hers/his and of a group or community. Such factors may affect her/his judgements, decision and moral obligations in the face of ethical dilemmas she/he may encounter.

The code contains broad value statements which nurses may use as a guide in reflecting on the degree to which their practice demonstrates these values. The explanatory statements help to interpret the expressed values. These are not exhaustive but can be used for further exploration and consideration of ethical concerns in nursing practice.

A code of ethics is not intended to provide direction for resolution of specific ethical dilemmas nor can the document adequately address ethical concepts and concerns.

Fiji's rich and diverse cultures make nursing practice ethically challenging. Nurses are regarded as independent and inter-dependent health agents and may have personal moral stance which conflicts with participation in certain procedures. Nurses are morally entitled to refuse to participate in procedures which would violate personal moral beliefs and values. However, nurses must not refuse involvement, if there is any possibility of danger to the life or

welfare of any person. The code of ethics indicates the fundamental moral commitment and ideals of the profession whilst the code of conduct informs the public of the minimum requirements for practice in the profession. The two(2) documents, together with policies by the nurses and midwives board, ministry of health and public service commission regulations, will provide a working framework for nursing practice for nurses in Fiji.

PREAMBLE

Nurses collaborate with families, groups and individual clients in order to restore or improve the clients' health status.

Nurses work with health professionals and relevant agencies using multi-sectoral approach for optimal care. Nursing is basically founded on caring and a respect for human beings and human life.

Therapeutic processes compliment nursing care through provision of health promotion, education, rehabilitation, counselling and empowerment of individuals or groups in their own health care.

Nurses provide care throughout the life span from birth to the protection of life in early years, the promotion of life in mid years and the ensuring of quality of life in later years and even to a peaceful death.

Nurses have professional responsibilities based on the following principles and adapted on the International Council of Nurses (ICN) code for nurses:

- To preserve life;
- To promote health;
- To prevent illness;
- To alleviate suffering;
- To aid the dying to a peaceful death;

These principles signify three (3) very important values :

- (i) the human is of incalculable worth and should be respected and revered regardless of differences such as ethnic, age, creed, colour or health status;
- (ii) human life must be regarded as sacred and has a mysterious character;
- (iii) caring which is central and fundamental to nursing must be seen as the basis for nursing ethics. It is demonstrated in compassion, conscience, confidence, commitment, loyalty and competence;

GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

- A to highlight the fundamental moral commitment of the nursing profession;
- B to inform the community the values which nurses hold;
- C to provide guideline for nurses in the ethical consideration of nursing practice;
- D to provide nurses the basis for self and professional reflection on their practice;

CODE OF ETHICS

1. VALUE STATEMENT ONE (1) RELATING TO CLIENTS

Nurses respect patients and clients as individuals and groups with rights, needs and values and must be provided services with respect for human dignity, unrestricted by cultural, religious, socio-economic, ethnic, political differences and health status.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Nursing care for any individual or group should not be compromised because of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, socio-economic, health status or any other ground.

2. Respect for a person's need includes recognition of the individual's place in a family and community and participation of significant others in his/her care. Caring includes the provision of helping services which are appropriate to the needs of clients and significant others.
3. Respect for person's needs, beliefs and values includes culturally sensitive care and the provision of as much comfort, dignity, privacy, alleviation of pain and consoling of grieving or dying individual/family.
4. Respect includes the development of confidence and trust in the relationship between nurses and the people for whom they care.
5. Where personal information is required for teaching, research or other purposes, protection of the person's anonymity and privacy must be ensured and consent obtained.
6. Respect the rights of persons to make informed choices about their care.

7. Recognise the need for individuals or groups to receive the information concerning health care from doctors, nurses and other health professionals.
8. Encourage and support individuals or groups in decision-making that respect their right and beliefs about treatment.
9. Protect the rights of individuals and groups.
10. Demonstrate knowledge of the rights of individuals and groups in health care setting.
11. Recognise when policies or practice impinge on the rights of individuals or groups.
12. Nurses safeguard the clients' rights to privacy by ensuring confidentiality of information.

2. VALUE STATEMENT TWO (2) RELATING TO NURSING PRACTICE

Nurses promote and uphold the practice of quality nursing care.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Quality nursing care includes holistic care provided by appropriately qualified and competent nurses.
2. Promotion of quality nursing

- care includes valuing of continuing education as a means of maintaining and increasing knowledge and skills.
3. Promote and maintain high standard of care through continual monitoring and evaluation of nursing practice.
4. Research is necessary for the development of nursing practice.
5. Nurses demonstrate honesty, dedication, accountability, and reliability in the provision of quality nursing care.
6. The nurse maintains competence in nursing

3. VALUE STATEMENT THREE (3) RELATING TO NURSING PROFESSION

Nurses value their nursing responsibilities and practice as consistent with the obligations of the profession and development of quality in nursing care.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the professional body of knowledge and self-development.

2. The nurse participates in the profession's effort to implement and improve standards of nursing.
3. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care.
4. The nurse participates in the profession's effort to provide safety for the public from misinformation, misrepresentation, malpractice, negligence and to maintain the integrity of nursing.
5. Promote continuing education throughout her/his nursing practice.
6. Accept responsibility for their own development.
7. Demonstrate initiatives in the regular update of current knowledge and skills.

4. VALUE STATEMENT FOUR (4) RELATING TO CO-WORKERS

Nurses must collaborate with other health workers in the provision of comprehensive health care

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. As independent and interdependent agent, nurses have moral obligations in the provision of nursing care.
2. Nurses participate with other health care providers recognising the perspective and expertise of each team member.
3. Nurses may question/intervene any conduct or practices from co-workers or any person which may appear incompetent, unprofessional, unethical or illegal.
4. The nurse collaborates with members of health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet health needs of the public.
5. The nurse acts to protect the client and the public when health care and safety are affected.
6. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgements and actions.

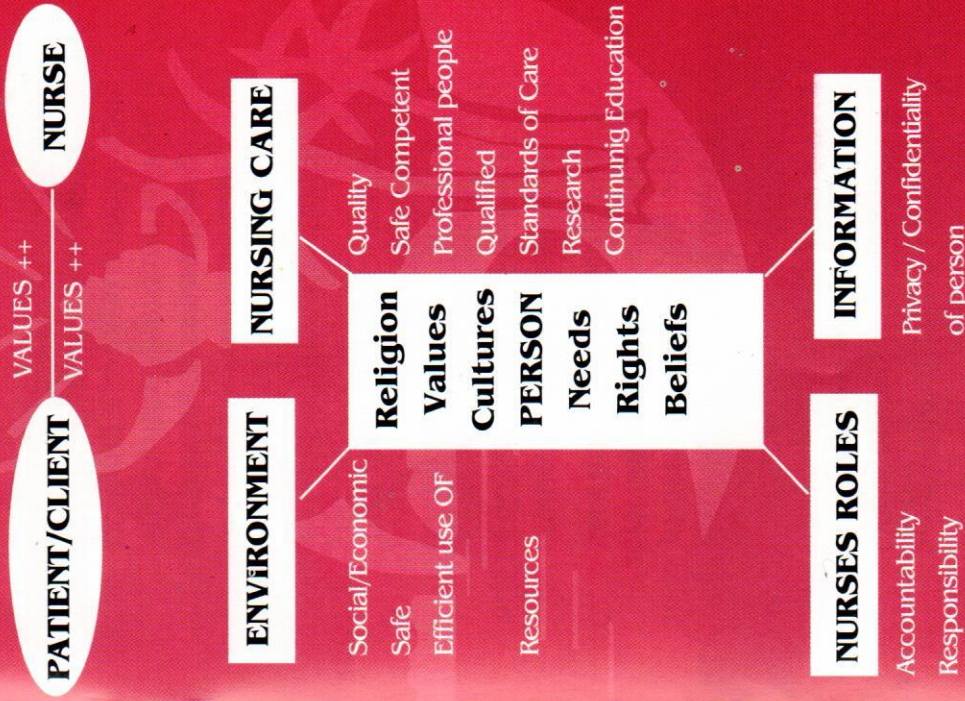
5. VALUE STATEMENT FIVE (5) RELATING TO SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Nurses value the promotion of ecological, socio-economic status, clean and healthy environment that supports and sustains health and well being in society.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Nurses acknowledge that the social environment in which people reside has an impact on their health. In collaboration with other health professionals and consumers, nurses acknowledge the multi-sectoral approach necessary in enlisting support or action to attain or maintain safe and healthy environment.
2. Nurses value participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and procedures which promote safe and efficient use of resources.
3. Nursing includes involvement in the detection of ill-effects of the environment on the health of persons, the ill-effects of human activities on the natural environment and assist communities in their actions to minimize these effects.

FRAMEWORK



4. Nurses act to promote self-reliance in people and healthy living.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NURSES

Each registered nurse shall act, at all times, in such a manner as to :

- Safeguard and promote the interests of individual patients and clients
- Serve the interests of society
- Enhance public trust and confidence
- Uphold professional good standing and reputation of the profession

As a registered nurse, you are personally accountable for your practice and in the exercise of your professional accountability, must :

- 1 Act always in such a manner as to promote and safeguard the interests and well-being of patients and clients;
- 2 Ensure that no action or omission on your part, or within your sphere of responsibility, is detrimental to the interests, condition or safety of patients and clients;

- 3 Acknowledge any limitations in your knowledge and competence and decline any duties or responsibilities unless able to perform them in a safe and skilled manner;
- 4 Work in an open and cooperative manner with patients, clients and families and encourage and respect their involvement in their planning and delivery of care.
- 5 Work in collaboration with other health care professionals in the provision of care and recognize and respect their particular contributions.
- 6 Avoid any abuse of your privileged relationship with patients and clients.
- 7 Report to the appropriate authority where it appears that the health or safety of colleagues is at risk, as such circumstances may compromise standards of care and practice.
- 8 Refuse any gift, favour or hospitality from patients or clients currently in your care which might be interpreted as seeking to exert influence or obtain preferential consideration.

- 9 Ensure that your professional status is not used in the promotion of commercial products or services, declare any financial or other interests in relevant organizations providing such goods or services and ensure that your professional judgement is not influenced by any commercial considerations.

NOTE

Refer to the new PSC Code of Conduct, PSC Act 1999 as it is also relevant to the Code of Conduct for Nurses practising in Fiji.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. American Nurses' Association: 1985 Code for Nurses;
2. Australian Nursing Council: 1993 Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia;
3. Canadian Nurses Association : 1989 Code of Ethics for Nursing;
4. International Council of Nurses: 1973 Code for Nurses : Ethical Concepts Applied to Nursing;
5. The New Zealand Nursing Association 1988 : Code of Ethics;

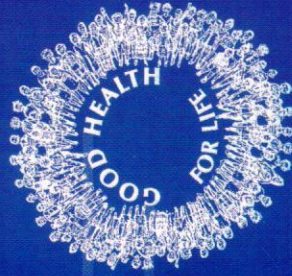
**NURSES &
MIDWIVES BOARD**

FIJI



**CODE OF ETHICS
&
CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR FIJI NURSES**

1999



DESIGN BY

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

MINISTRY OF HEALTH, FIJI