



Review Article

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A REVIEW ON ETHICS, AYURVED DISCIPLINE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH: THE CONCERT ART OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Ethics deals with the set of values of rights accomplish. Medical ethics is a practical branch of ethics that analyses clinical medicine's observance and connected methodical examination. Medical ethics is based on standards that professionals can pass on in the case of any bewilderment or divergence. The four pillars of medical ethics are Beneficence (doing well), non-maleficence (to do no harm), Autonomy (giving the patient the freedom to choose freely, where they are able) Justice (ensuring fairness). Although the modern-day world predisposes these four philosophies, they are adapted as universal and absolute ethics in the medical field. Clinical ethics is beached in the certainty that medicine is an innately moral endeavour. Ayurvedic ethics take an appealing situation within the little dialogue in the Indian history of medical ethics. The expression 'Ayurvedic ethics' is here used in contrast to the codified beliefs of the noble Ayurved profession as rightly said as 'Ayurvedic professional ethics'.

Keywords: Medical ethics, Ayurved restraint, Public health, Medical practice

INTRODUCTION

From the time immemorial, doctors/vaidyas have been held in high esteem by society in different parts of the world, and this is still true in contemporary times, all the criticism against the doctors notwithstanding. Medical Ethics have existed ever since the practice of medicine, and references are available from the time of the ancient civilization. It is not a sheer coincidence that in several major languages of the world, the practitioner of medicine is called by a word which means the same be it "Doctor" (the highest qualified), "Hakim" (the wise) or "Vaidya" (the knowledgeable). While it reflects the attitude of the society towards the doctor, who is considered a friend, philosopher and guide, it also bestows an enormous responsibility upon the doctor vis-à-vis their conduct towards the community. And this responsibility is quite apart from their technical skill, for it has more to do with the qualities of human understanding, which has given the medical profession the status of a noble profession. Ethics is a highly complex issue as it cuts across social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual beliefs and practices. With the newer techniques to support life, 'brain death for harvesting human organs and the trial of drugs on human beings have become issues of significant concern in ethical medical practices.^{1,2}

Healthcare and ethical facets and facades

Medical practice has been based on the principles and values designed to protect and promote the patients' health. The doctor-patient relationship, therefore, was built upon mutual trust and confidence. However, this relationship has started showing deterioration during the last few years. This is mainly due to:

1. Increase in the availability of technology
2. Changes in the social attitude
3. Changes in the behavioural patterns
4. Diminished human-human interactions
5. The rising cost of services

6. Demystification of the medicine
7. Increased awareness of patients about their rights

The issues in medical ethics frequently engross life and death matters. Serious health issues are raised over patients' rights, informed consent, privacy, proficiency, advance directives, carelessness, inattention etc. Reciprocated faith and association among doctors and patients are significant in a treatment plan. Altering Trends in the Health field does affect this connection.

Subsequent quotes exemplify the need, value and compass of Medical Ethics:

"The Physician who learns the Science of Medicine under the guidance of his preceptors and regularly takes the practical training and then practices Medicine is a real physician; others are quacks."

Acharya Sushruta

Let the honour of the disciple be as dear to thee as thine own,
and the honour of thine associate be like the fear of thy master
and the fear of thy master like the fear of heaven.

Babylonian Talmud

Ethics is the activity of man directed to secure the inner
perfection of his personality.

Albert Schweitzer^{1,2,3}

Changing trends in the Medical field and Ethical issues

Medical care nowadays is being equated with other technological services. Further, health care has multiple dimensions: clinical, technical, legal, ethical and financial. The responsibility of care which earlier rested on the individual doctor, has now changed its focus. Many other issues are also considered, i.e.:

- a) Patient's rights

- b) Doctor's autonomy
- c) Benefits of treatment to patient and society
- d) Quality of life
- e) Equitable distribution
- f) Priorities
- g) Cost-benefit
- h) Cost-effectiveness
- i) Rationing of care

The purpose of Medical Ethics is to ensure the following (a) doctors and other treating individuals use their knowledge for the benefit of patients, (b) doctors do not abuse their power (c) they practice within the values determined by the society (d) doctors follow general principles of mortality (i) respect patient's autonomy (j) respect patient's right to select a certain mode of therapy (k) respect patient's choices which are usually based on their convictions (l) Do not harm at any cost (m) try to do the greatest good for the largest numbers (n) maintain confidentiality (o) act justifiably and reasonably with the patients.^{1,2,3}

Some Legal and Ethical troubles in everyday practice

Use of Drugs

- Banned Drugs
- Substandard/Adulterated drugs
- Iatrogenic Disorders due to drugs
- Radiations

Contraception and Sterilization

- Targets vs Human dignity
- Community needs vs individual safety
- Abortion and MTP

New advances in Infertility Management

- Prenatal sex determination
- Aid vs Adoption
- Rights of the embryo

Defining Death

- Criteria for irreversible damage
- Organ donation
- Euthanasia and the Right to die with dignity
- Meaning of suffering and death in different religions

Negligence

- Partitioning responsibility
- Contribution of patient^{2,3,4}

Essential doctrine of Ethics and Ayurved

In Ayurved, the issue of ethics is closely comparable with Dharma. There are no separate sections on ethics in compendia, but the flavour of ethical spirit runs throughout the text, which indicates how the base of ethics inculcates. Ayurved treatises offer many strategies for good medical practices. Qualities of a good patient and good physician are mentioned in Chatuspada. The Adhyayana Vidhi enlightens the procedure of medical education and rules for setting ensuing practices. Sadvritta and Vaidya Vrutti are other milestones which a complex set of rules for good professional conduct. Ayurved classics also guide the physician on how to act together with a patient.^{5,6}

Broad-spectrum Ethical Contemplation

Ethical behaviour is necessary right across the whole spectrum of medical practice, the main consideration being the patient's welfare. Ethical behaviour is a self-imposed duty upon each doctor, and no pride can be taken in behaviour calculated to avoid official censure. The disapproval of one's colleagues should be at least as great a deterrent as the authority of courts of law.

Although there are certain implicit and explicit criteria, the desired behaviour needs to be following the existing culture, religious values and secular values. These values are likely to change over time, and therefore, the ethical issues form part of the dynamic and not static discipline. Different types of approaches can understand ethical issues. At present, there are three main approaches:

1. An approach based on duty

This approach is based on the duties and obligations of giving health care. The organizations usually spell out the responsibilities and obligations, and they are adopted as a code of conduct.

2. An approach based on rights

The principle of this approach gives maximum importance to the patient's autonomy, i.e. patients have the right to decide their treatment and choose their destiny.

3. An approach based on utilitarianism

The utilitarian approach stresses society rather than individual patients. The weightage is on the consequences and results rather than method and approach. The aim of this approach is more benefits and less harm.^{7,8,9}

CONCLUSION

Medical ethics may be described as a code of behaviour accepted voluntarily within the profession instead of statutes and regulations imposed by official legislation. The rules of medical ethics as applicable to individual medical practitioners are also relevant to medical practice in hospitals with certain modifications because of the organizational nature of the hospitals. It is important to remember that the early Indian codes represent early days in the professionalization of Indian medicine, but also of treatment worldwide they are the result of the beginnings of international discussions on ethical and educational standards for medical practice. However, the decisions made in the early years of Ayurvedic formalization formed the foundation for later policy and set the pattern for the CCIM's decision of 1982, when it adopted its code of ethics. Since then, Ayurvedic professional ethics have remained static.

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