
Professional Certificate in Mental Health and Physical Disabilities

Legal and Ethical Issues in Mental Health and Physical Disabilities

Legal and Ethical Issues in Mental Health and Physical Disabilities Glossary

A

Advance Directives: Legal documents that allow individuals to specify their preferences regarding medical treatment in advance, including mental health treatment and end-of-life care.

Assault: The intentional act of causing someone to fear that they will be physically harmed, even if no physical contact occurs.

B

Beneficence: The ethical principle of doing good and promoting the well-being of individuals, which is essential in mental health and physical disabilities care.

Bioethics: The study of ethical issues arising from advances in biology and medicine, including those related to mental health and physical disabilities.

C

Capacity: The ability of an individual to understand and make decisions about their medical treatment, including mental health care and interventions for physical disabilities.

Confidentiality: The ethical obligation to protect sensitive information shared by individuals in mental health and physical disabilities settings.

Consent: The voluntary agreement of an individual to receive medical treatment, including mental health interventions and services for physical disabilities.

D

Decision-Making Capacity: The ability of an individual to understand information, weigh options, and communicate their choices regarding medical treatment, including mental health care and physical disabilities interventions.

Depression: A common mental health disorder characterized by persistent sadness, loss of interest, and feelings of hopelessness, which can significantly impact a person's daily functioning.

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, leading

to challenges in participating fully in society.

E

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person, which is crucial in providing effective care for individuals with mental health issues and physical disabilities.

End-of-Life Care: Medical and emotional support provided to individuals who are nearing the end of their lives, including those with mental health conditions and physical disabilities.

Equality: The principle of treating all individuals fairly and equally, including those with mental health issues and physical disabilities, to promote social justice and inclusivity.

F

Fraud: The intentional deception or misrepresentation for personal gain, which can occur in the context of mental health services and treatments for physical disabilities.

G

Guardianship: Legal authority granted to an individual to make decisions on behalf of someone who is deemed incapable of making decisions themselves, often seen in cases of severe mental health issues or physical disabilities.

H

Healthcare Proxy: A legal document that designates a person to make healthcare decisions on behalf of another individual, including choices related to mental health treatment and physical disabilities care.

I

Informed Consent: The process of providing individuals with relevant information about their medical treatment options, including risks and benefits, to enable them to make autonomous decisions in mental health and physical disabilities care.

J

Justice: The ethical principle of fairness and equality in the distribution of resources and opportunities, including access to mental health services and support for individuals with physical disabilities.

K

Karen Ann Quinlan: A landmark legal case in the United States that established the right of individuals to refuse life-sustaining treatment, setting a precedent for end-of-life care decisions, including those related to mental health issues and physical disabilities.

L

Laws: Rules and regulations established by governments to govern the behavior of individuals and institutions, including those in the mental health and physical disabilities sectors.

M

Mental Capacity: The ability of an individual to make decisions about their own welfare, including medical treatment, in the context of mental health issues and physical disabilities.

N

Nonmaleficence: The ethical principle of avoiding harm and preventing negative outcomes in the care of individuals with mental health issues and physical disabilities.

O

Outpatient Treatment: Mental health or physical disabilities care provided to individuals who do not require hospitalization, allowing them to receive services while continuing to live in the community.

P

Patient Rights: Legal protections that ensure individuals receiving mental health treatment and care for physical disabilities are treated with dignity, respect, and autonomy.

Privacy: The right of individuals to control the access and use of their personal information, including in mental health records and physical disabilities documentation.

Q

Quality of Life: The overall well-being and satisfaction of individuals, including those with mental health issues and physical disabilities, in various aspects of their lives.

R

Restraints: Physical or chemical interventions used to restrict an individual's movement or behavior, which must be used judiciously and ethically in mental health and physical disabilities settings.

S

Substitute Decision-Maker: An individual appointed to make decisions on behalf of someone who is unable to do so themselves due to mental health issues or physical disabilities.

T

Therapeutic Privilege: Withholding information from individuals about their medical condition or treatment when the full disclosure may cause harm, which poses ethical dilemmas in mental health and physical disabilities care.

U

Unintentional Tort: Harm caused to an individual due to negligence or lack of care, which can occur in the provision of mental health services and treatment of physical disabilities.

V

Vulnerable Populations: Groups of individuals who are at increased risk of harm or exploitation, including those with mental health issues and physical disabilities, requiring special protections and support.

W

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP): A self-designed prevention and recovery system created by a person with a mental health condition or physical disability to maintain their wellness and manage their symptoms.

X

Xenophobia: Prejudice and discrimination against individuals from other countries or cultures, which can impact the mental health and well-being of immigrants and refugees with physical disabilities.

Y

Yazoo v. United States (1910): A U.S. Supreme Court case that addressed the legality of a land deal, highlighting issues of ethics and justice in legal decisions that can impact individuals with mental health issues and physical disabilities.

Z

Zero Tolerance Policy: A strict approach that mandates severe consequences for any violations, such as abuse or neglect, in mental health and physical disabilities care facilities to uphold safety and ethical standards.