

Legal Framework in Healthcare

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1. Introduction

- The legal framework in healthcare is the body of laws and regulations governing medical practice.
- It defines the rights and duties of patients, providers, and institutions.

2. Sources of Law

- **Statute law:** legislation passed by parliament that regulates health services and professions.
- **Common law:** principles developed through court decisions, including negligence.
- Professional regulations and ethical codes supplement formal law.

3. Duty of Care and Negligence

- **Duty of care:** the legal obligation to provide a reasonable standard of treatment.
- Negligence occurs when a breach of this duty causes harm to a patient.

4. Consent and Confidentiality

- Valid consent is legally required before most examinations and treatments.
- Laws protect the confidentiality of patient information and limit disclosure.

5. Professional Regulation

- Licensing bodies register practitioners and enforce standards of conduct.
- Disciplinary processes address malpractice and protect the public.

6. Summary

- The healthcare legal framework combines statute, common law, and regulation to protect patients and hold practitioners accountable for safe, lawful care.