

Ethical Decision-Making Models

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1. Introduction

- Ethical decision-making models are structured frameworks for resolving moral problems in healthcare.
- They promote consistent, transparent, and defensible decisions.

2. Purpose of Models

- They break complex dilemmas into manageable, logical steps.
- They reduce bias and ensure all relevant factors are considered.

3. Common Steps

- **Identify the problem:** clarify the ethical issue and the facts involved.
- **Identify stakeholders:** recognise everyone affected by the decision.
- Consider options, apply ethical principles, and choose the best course.

4. Theoretical Approaches

- **Principlism:** applies autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.
- **Consequentialism:** judges actions by their outcomes, while deontology focuses on duties.

5. Implementation

- Decisions should be acted upon, then reviewed for their effects.
- Documentation and reflection support learning and accountability.

6. Summary

- Ethical decision-making models provide step-by-step frameworks, supported by ethical theory, to help practitioners resolve dilemmas consistently and justifiably.