

Introduction to Medical–legal Ethics

Introduction to Medical–legal Ethics

1. Introduction

- Medical-legal ethics combines moral principles with the laws that govern healthcare practice.
- It guides practitioners to act both ethically and lawfully.

2. Relationship Between Law and Ethics

- **Ethics:** concerns what ought to be done based on moral values.
- **Law:** sets enforceable rules that practitioners must obey.
- The two often overlap but can sometimes conflict.

3. Core Areas

- Consent, confidentiality, and negligence are central to both ethics and law.
- Patient rights and professional duties link moral and legal obligations.

4. Importance for Practice

- Understanding both protects patients and shields practitioners from liability.
- It supports trust and accountability in the healthcare system.

5. Sources of Guidance

- Professional codes, statutes, and court decisions inform conduct.
- Ethics committees and legal advisers help resolve difficult cases.

6. Summary

- Medical-legal ethics integrates moral reasoning with legal requirements, ensuring healthcare is delivered responsibly, safely, and within the law.