

Introduction to Medical Legal Ethics

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1. Introduction

- Medical legal ethics combines moral principles with the laws that govern healthcare practice.
- It guides professionals to act both ethically and lawfully when caring for patients.

2. Key Terms

- **Ethics:** principles distinguishing right from wrong conduct.
- **Law:** enforceable rules set by the state.
- **Medical jurisprudence:** the application of law to medical practice.

3. Relationship Between Law and Ethics

- Many ethical duties, such as consent and confidentiality, are also legal requirements.
- An action can be legal yet unethical, or ethical yet not specifically covered by law.

4. Core Areas

- Informed consent and patient autonomy.
- Confidentiality and data protection.
- Negligence, malpractice, and professional liability.

5. Importance for Practitioners

- Understanding both fields prevents harm, complaints, and legal action.
- It protects patient rights and the integrity of the profession.

6. Summary

- Medical legal ethics ensures care is morally sound and legally compliant.
- Professionals must balance ethical duty with legal obligation in every decision.