

Healthcare Provider's Ethical Obligations

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1. Introduction

- Ethical obligations are the moral duties that guide how providers treat patients and colleagues.
- They sit alongside legal duties and professional codes of conduct.

2. Duties to Patients

- **Fidelity:** keeping promises and remaining loyal to the patient's interests.
- **Veracity:** being truthful about diagnosis, prognosis, and errors.
- **Confidentiality:** safeguarding sensitive patient information.

3. Competence and Care

- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge and skills through continuing education.
- Practicing only within one's scope of competence and referring when needed.
- Providing care without discrimination based on background or status.

4. Duties to Profession and Society

- Reporting unsafe practice and protecting public health.
- Using limited resources responsibly and avoiding waste.
- Modeling integrity and accountability for trainees and peers.

5. Balancing Obligations

- Conflicts may arise between patient wishes, employer policy, and personal values.
- **Professional code:** bodies such as nursing and medical councils publish binding ethical standards.
- Reflective practice and consultation help providers meet obligations responsibly.