

Ethics for Addiction Services Professionals

Bioethical Services of Virginia, Inc.

Ethics Case Studies in Addiction Services

Description: This highly interactive session will review a series of case studies involving ethics in addiction services. After briefly reviewing a practical method for analyzing ethical issues, we will apply that process to a series of recent case studies. Topics will vary depending upon audience participation, but will consider paternalism and the refusal of services, boundary issues, confidentiality and public safety.

Objectives:

1. To review a practical process to identify, analyze and resolve ethical issues.
2. To identify the limits of individual choice in refusing therapy.
3. To clarify the ethical conflict between individual rights and the public good.

Ethics and Dual Diagnosis: Does Categorization Matter?

Description: This highly interactive session will consider the ethical complications that develop when individuals present with dual diagnoses. We will examine case studies that force us to consider the ethical implications of making a primary diagnosis as either mental illness or substance use disorder, and we will discuss the practical results of serving individuals in a system that encourages this type of categorization.

Objectives:

1. To review cases in which a distinction between primary diagnoses is made.
2. To examine the ethical implications of making such distinctions.
3. To identify ethical responses to cases involving dual diagnoses.

Ethical Issues in Marketing Addiction Services

Description: This highly interactive discussion will consider a series of ethical issues that are associated with the provision of addiction services, primarily from the provider's perspective. Rather than considering cases involving treatment decisions for individuals served, we will concentrate on organizational and management issues. After examining some basic concepts in business ethics, we will apply those ideas to the addiction services setting by considering issues including, but not limited to, organizational structures and relationships between colleagues, ethical issues in marketing and fundraising, and the organizational and individual staff member use of social media.

Objectives:

1. To review important concepts in business ethics regarding the producer-consumer relationship.
2. To examine specific ethical issues arising from the use of social networking platforms.
3. To consider whether or not marketing addiction services presents special ethical considerations beyond those that might attach to other commodities and services.

The Ethics of Social Networking and Electronic Communication

Description: This highly interactive seminar will consider a series of ethical issues that emerge when clients and providers communicate by electronic means and engage social networking technologies. We will examine this topic as it relates to considerations of provider-recipient trust, boundaries, confidentiality and responsiveness. In attending this session, participants will have the opportunity to analyze the impact of modern communication and record keeping technologies on ethical assumptions.

Objectives:

1. Review basic concepts of confidentiality and apply those concepts to new information and documentation technologies.
2. Define the concept of inappropriate dual relationships and apply that concept to social networking interactions.
3. Identify conditions under which breaches of confidentiality are ethically permissible or obligatory.
4. Examine ethical issues associated with new systems of clinical record keeping and client access.

The Ethics of Gender, Sex and Sexuality

Description: This highly interactive session will review a series of ethical issues surrounding gender, sex and sexuality. We will discuss ethical concepts and study specific case studies involving topics such as placement issues, truthfulness issues, autonomy issues, staff member's personal values and comfort, and new challenges presented by recent legal changes regarding same sex couples.

Objectives:

1. To discuss the ethical implications posed by services that are offered to gay, lesbian and transgender patients.
2. To examine the ethical demands that are placed on the provider-recipient relationship when dealing with sexuality.
3. To consider the ethics of sexuality activity as it relates to mental health services.

The Ethics of Confidentiality

Description: This highly interactive seminar will review ethical issues that arise in the provision of developmental services, mental health services, and substance abuse services specifically as they relate to the ethical limits of confidentiality. Topics will include the theoretical basis for confidentiality claims, confidentiality and the duty to warn, and confidentiality and dual relationships. After a general discussion of the concept of clinical privacy, real-life case studies will be used to examine specific difficult challenges.

Objectives:

1. To provide a philosophical understanding of the value of clinical confidentiality.
2. To examine the conflict between respect for client confidentiality and the duty to disclose information for the avoidance of harm.
3. To examine the special problems of confidentiality that emerge when multiple relationships exist.
4. To improve the abilities of those in attendance to recognize the key ethical issues in these cases, analyze them and develop rational and ethical resolutions.

Leadership Ethics and Moral Management

Description: This highly interactive session will provide an introduction to leadership and business ethics issues. After discussing basic concepts of leadership ethics, and reviewing the most common sources of ethical confusion, we will review strategies for creating an organizational environment of ethics.

Objectives:

1. To examine the source of ethical obligation within an organizational structure.
2. To review the process by which leadership ethics issues can be identified, analyzed and resolved.
3. To discuss, specifically, the role of managers within an organizational structure by considering the potential ethical conflicts between duty to the organization and the duty to support supervisees.

Case Studies in Behavioral Healthcare Ethics

Description: This highly interactive seminar will introduce attendees to a pragmatic method of dealing with the most common types of ethical issues that emerge in behavioral health. After reviewing a practical method for identifying, analyzing and resolving relevant ethical issues, we will apply that method to a series of real-life case studies.

Objectives:

1. To introduce a practical method for resolving clinical ethics issues in the behavioral health field.
2. To review ethical concepts as they relate to case studies developed by the attendees. Topics are likely to include, but will not be limited to, paternalism and the limits of client autonomy, boundaries and dual relationships, professional integrity and disagreements among providers, patients and surrogate decision makers.
3. To demonstrate the strategies that can be used to resolve these cases.

Professional Boundaries and Clinical Ethics

Description: This highly interactive seminar will present an overview of ethical issues that develop when providers and recipients fail to recognize professional boundaries. By examining real-life ethics case consultation cases, we will explore key concepts and generate a better understanding of the relationship between healthcare personnel and the individuals whom they serve.

Objectives:

1. To define professional boundaries and dual relationships in an ethically useful way.
2. To explore difficult cases where boundary crossings are difficult to identify or avoid.
3. To demonstrate tools and policies that can be of use in avoiding inappropriate boundary crossings.

Budgeting Ethics

Description: This highly-interactive seminar will provide an introduction to some of the most interesting and difficult ethical issues in the provision of mental health services in an environment of scarce financial resources. We will demonstrate a practical approach to ethical reasoning that can be applied to a variety of sub-topics including prioritization and micro-allocation, macro-allocation and budgeting across service areas, and ethical issues regarding non-payment and no-shows. This session will provide a case-based discussion of relevant moral issues.

Objectives:

1. To identify the key ethical values that impact decisions about the distribution of scarce resources.
2. To demonstrate a practical algorithm for making allocation decisions.
3. To define the ethical implications of individual choice and responsibility.