Module Two
Ethical Decision Making
Theories and Principles

Ethical theories provide framework for good moral judgment.
Understanding modern ethical theories will help you understand the basis for making good ethical decisions.

- **Duty Based Ethics**
  - Deontological Theory

- **Consequences Based Ethics**
  - Teleological Theory

- **Deontological Theory**
  - “Deon” meaning duty
  - Demonstrates respect for rules
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**Teleological Theory**

- “Telos” meaning end or goal
- Focuses on end result

**Deontological or Teleological**

- I am very concerned about the outcome of a decision but less inclined to follow the rules if I am not happy with the outcome.
- The rules establish a fair and equitable resolution of any problem. I am comfortable following the rules and I am comfortable with the outcome.

**“The Ends Justifies the Means”**

*Teleological Approach*
Follow the Rules to the Outcome

*Deontological Approach*

Deontological + Teleological = Deonutility

or

Good Principles and Guidance
All decisions are guided by a set of moral principles:

- Respect for Autonomy,
- Beneficence,
- Nonmaleficence,
- Justice.

**Respect for Autonomy** - is the right of the client to make their own choices.
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**Respect for Autonomy**

Relies on accurate information presented to the client so an informed decision can be made.

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**Beneficence**

Is an obligation to ensure the care provided is of benefit.
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Nonmaleficence
Is doing no harm to a client’s overall well being

Beneficence and Nonmaleficence work together

Justice
Justice maximizes fairness to ensure resources are available to any and all who require them
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Two Types of Justice
Distributive And Comparative

Distributive Justice
Allocation of health care resources at the societal level

Comparative Justice
Allocation of health services to the individual
You work in an understaffed out-patient physiotherapy facility. The facility is overbooked and has a long waiting list. Only one appointment is available within the next two weeks.

You must choose between:

Ms Jones, a 29 year-old spinal cord injured female who recently injured her shoulder and is having difficulty moving her wheelchair or

Mr Smith, a 70 year-old male who recently had a knee replacement and needs rehabilitation to get him mobile and off a walker.

Ethical Decision Making Rules and Duties

- Veracity
- Fidelity
- Conflict of Interest
- Confidentiality
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**Veracity**

The duty to tell the truth

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**Fidelity**

The duty

- To honour professional commitments
- Establish relationships of trust
- Place the client’s interests ahead of our own

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**Conflict of Interest**

The duty to declare where the client’s interests are not paramount
Confidentiality

The duty to maintain client confidentiality

Virtue Theory
Care Theory
Relational Ethics

Virtue Theory
Moral Character or Moral Agent that drives good decision making

What makes a person good also makes them do the right thing
Care Theory and Relational Ethics are alternate approaches to principle based ethics.

Care Theory

Related to justice and follows an empathetic approach.

Relational Ethics

Nurtures relationships with clients.
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Central Premise

Having good moral character, a caring approach and nurturing relationship to your client with result in good ethical decisions.

Remember:

Personal approaches influenced by Deontological or Teleological theories or both
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Remember:

Modern ethical decision making has evolved to consider the principles of Autonomy, Beneficence, Nonmaleficence and Justice

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Remember:

Rules and duties including Veracity, Fidelity, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

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Remember:

Virtue and Care theories and Relational ethics impact
Understanding theories and principles of ethics will lead to good decision making.