**Discrepancies between Ethical Standards and Practice**

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Ethical standards are universal codes of conduct that provide a practical foundation identifying the kind of actions, purpose, and motives to be undertaken in specific situations for healthcare workers (Ulrich et al., 2010). They are moral principles that guide healthcare professionals in conducting themselves while making healthcare decisions that ultimately determine the consequences of such conduct. Healthcare professionals, specifically nurses, have long struggled with maintaining ethical standards while providing patient care. Ethical issues occur in healthcare situations where moral questions of rightness or wrongness trigger decision-making and kind patient care. In the Essentia and Sanford healthcare institutions, several discrepancies between ethical values and practice are worth noting. The first discrepancy involves the moral standard of professional practice due to staffing inadequacies (Ulrich et al., 2010). Insufficient staffing and other organizational obstacles hinder nurses’ dedication to meeting their duties, such as protecting patient rights, lessening patient suffering, and preserving their integrity. Healthcare demands to provide high-quality care to patients and reduce care costs with limited resources, result to stress levels for nurses. High patient turnout can also be overwhelming in healthcare with a small number of nurses. Patient acuity levels and complex treatment to patients with aggressive behaviors need high levels of attention which might be challenging to nurses.

Another practice that challenges the ethical standards of beneficence and preserving patients’ best interest is protecting patient rights (Ulrich et al., 2010). Circumstantial evidence shows that when nurses advocate for patient rights, they get discouraged due to the problems and complex processes that follow patient rights advocacy. Another discrepancy involves missed nursing care, which occurs when the healthcare professional does not take the right action, leading to undesirable consequences for the patient and the healthcare profession. The issue is often associated with workplace bullying leading to absenteeism, job dissatisfaction, medication errors, and readmissions (Ulrich et al., 2010). Therefore, the discrepancies between the healthcare ethical standards and practice result in adverse patient outcomes in safety and quality care.

References

Ulrich, C. M., Taylor, C., Soeken, K., O’Donnell, P., Farrar, A., Danis, M., & Grady, C. (2010). Everyday ethics: ethical issues and stress in nursing practice. *Journal of advanced nursing*, *66*(11), 2510-2519.