Nursing and the Ethical Dilemmas

[Author’s Name]

Nursing and the Ethical Dilemmas

The healthcare workers interact with patients having diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence, their understanding of ethical medical practice is also diverse, influenced by their culture and individual experiences. The opinions about ethical medical practices varies along with cultural diversity. Culturally Congruent Practice refers to the nursing practices which are in accordance with the preferred cultural values, beliefs and the world view of the patients and their families (Marion, 2016). For nursing practices in an effective manner, it is compulsory for the nurse to have the ability to integrate and communicate the cultural values of the patients, with the teams of the health care providers. With the provision of culturally congruent practice, cultural gaps can be bridged and essential supportive care for all patients can be provided.

An ethical dilemma can be explained as a situation which creates the point to choose one or more morally acceptable or unacceptable options or courses of actions. It is a situation in which the selection of one option, prevents the selection of the other. There can be many instances of ethical dilemmas. The decision to tell the truth to the patient or to hide certain information, is another case of ethical dilemma (Bedrosian, 2015). The ability of the health care providers and workers to efficiently deliver health care in a manner which satisfies the socio-cultural and linguistic needs of the patients, is known as cultural competence. In health care systems, culture serves as a shorthand for the stress and uncertainty of health care providers, based on their individual perception regarding the familial and cultural background of the patient (Berlinger, 2017).

Among all the health care workers, nurses face diverse challenges. Nurses have to spend more time with the patients. They are also most likely to know about the treatment choices of the patients and their families (Bedrosian, 2015).

At the beginning of my career, I encountered a situation in which a woman from a Muslim background, came for her regular checkup during her pregnancy. I collected her previous medical reports, then prepared her medicines and instruments. When the doctor came for her checkup, she refused to get his services because he was male and as a Muslim woman she was forbidden to be seen or touched by a male stranger. She asked me to call a lady doctor for her checkup which was not available at that particular time in the hospital. Understanding her socio-cultural background, I asked her to wait until the lady doctor arrived at the hospital. She agreed upon this and waited for the lady doctor to perform her checkup, instead of me. This instance made me realize how crucial it is to understand the cultural background of the patient and cooperate with them.

Culturally Congruent Practice refers to the nursing practices which are in accordance with the preferred cultural values, beliefs and the world view of the patients and their families.

The diversity in the population of the United States of America has increased over the decades. U.S. Census Bureau information (cited by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists) reports that Asian population increased to 32 percent, from 2000 to 2009 in America. Hispanic population has increased to 37 percent, Native-American and Alaskan population have increased to 18 percent and the African-Americans population has increased to 13 percent (Committee Opinion on Health Care for Underserved Women Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness in the Delivery of Health Care, 2011).

The increased demographic diversity requires a sound understanding of cultural diversity and the potential challenges it can create in the present practice settings.

Nursing practice requires cultural congruence because there exists, a social interaction between the patient and the nurses. Nurses should learn about the cultural practices of the patients and families of those patients for providing them appropriate support and care. Cultural competency is required for providing care to the patients of different cultural backgrounds.

**References**

Bedrosian, J. D. (2015). NURSING IS HARD. UNADDRESSED ETHICAL ISSUES MAKE IT EVEN HARDER. *John Hopkins Magzine*, 1. Retrieved December 03, 2019, from https://hub.jhu.edu/magazine/2015/summer/nursing-ethics-and-burnout/

Berlinger, N. &. (2017). Culture and Moral Distress: What’s the Connection and Why Does It Matter? *AMA jounal of ethics, 19*(6), 2.

Committee Opinion on Health Care for Underserved Women Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness in the Delivery of Health Care. (2011). *The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.* Retrieved December 03, 2019, from www.acog.org/Resources-And-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Health-Care-for-Underserved-Women/Cultural-Sensitivity-and-Awareness-in-the-Delivery-of-Health-Care

Marion, L. D. (2016). Implementing the new ANA standard 8: Culturally congruent practice. *Online journal of issues in nursing, 22*(1), 4.

Ulrich, C. M. (2010). Everyday Ethics: Ethical Issues and Stress in Nursing Practice. *Journel of Advanced Nursing, 66*(11), 2-3.