Ethics Education Series for Community Service Providers across Ontario Health (West)
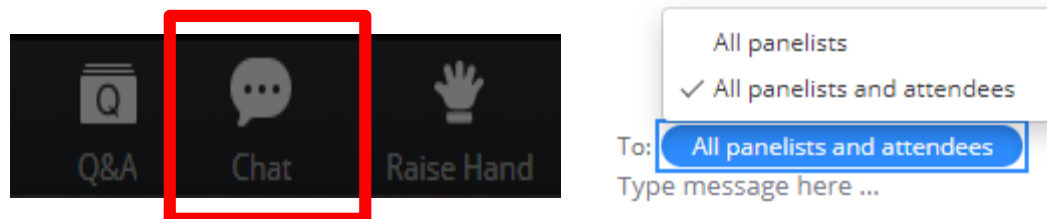
Title: **ETHICS MATTERS!**

Presenter: **Julija Kelecevic**, Regional Ethicist

Date: November 13, 2020.

Webinar Housekeeping

▶ Everyone will be muted except the host and moderator

▶ Ask questions through the Zoom chat box

▶ All webinars will be recorded and posted on Regional Ethics Network website

▶ Evaluation to follow

▶ Next month's speaker

We are privileged to provide care on lands that Indigenous peoples have called home for thousands of years.

Today's Speaker
Julija Kelecevic

Objectives

After participating in this session, you will be able to:

► Define concepts of ethics and what it means to apply it in a work setting;

► Identify the differences between other concepts sometimes confused with ethics, like risk management, the law or religious system;

► Identify what makes a situation an ethical dilemma;

► Discuss why ethics is important for individuals providing services in a community setting.

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What is Ethics?

► Area of moral philosophy concerned with what we *ought* to be and to do as individuals and communities

- What ought to be done

- What is right and what is wrong

- What makes actions right or wrong

- Moral character of a person

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What is Ethics for Community Service Providers?

► Applied ethics

► Subfield of bioethics

► Study of moral values and judgments as applied to healthcare and provision of services in community setting

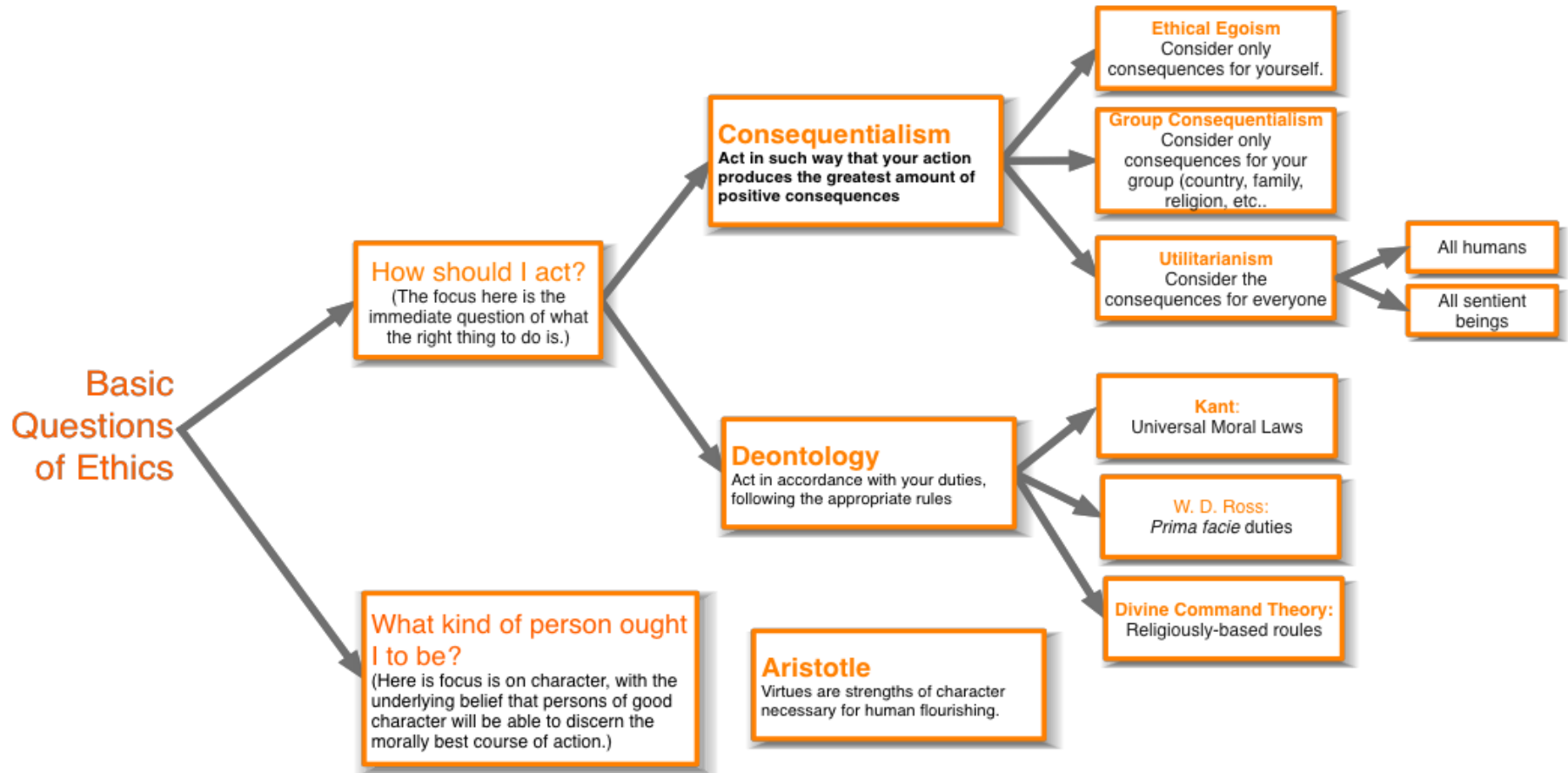 ▪ *Not* merely law, risk management, practice guidelines, policy, religion, or etiquette

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Aim

To protect and care for the people involved in the practice and reception of health care and community service.

Basic Questions of Ethics

How should I act?
(The focus here is the immediate question of what the right thing to do is.)

Consequentialism
Act in such way that your action produces the greatest amount of positive consequences

Ethical Egoism
Consider only consequences for yourself.

Group Consequentialism
Consider only consequences for your group (country, family, religion, etc..

Utilitarianism
Consider the consequences for everyone

All humans

All sentient beings

Deontology
Act in accordance with your duties, following the appropriate rules

Kant:
Universal Moral Laws

W. D. Ross:
Prima facie duties

Divine Command Theory:
Religiously-based roules

What kind of person ought I to be?
(Here is focus is on character, with the underlying belief that persons of good character will be able to discern the morally best course of action.)

Aristotle
Virtues are strengths of character necessary for human flourishing.

(c) Lawrence M. Hinman, 2016

http://ethicsupdates.net/illustrations/BasicQuestionsOfEthics.png

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Ethics *vs.* Law

"Ethics and law are not equivalent. Adherence to the law does not result in ethical behavior, and ethical behavior may not be covered by the law or may in fact be contrary to law or policy…….ethical duties typically exceed legal duties, and in some cases, the law mandates unethical conduct."

Derse A,R. (1999). Law and Ethics in Emergency Medicine.
Emerg Med Clin North Am.17(2): 307- 25

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Law vs. Ethics

► Law sets minimum standards

- *Ethical standards may be higher*

► Law focuses on what is socially required or permissible

- *Ethics examines and critiques social requirements*

► Law is descriptive in its prescribing
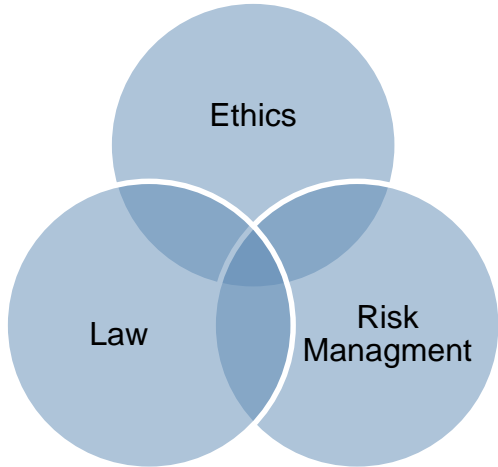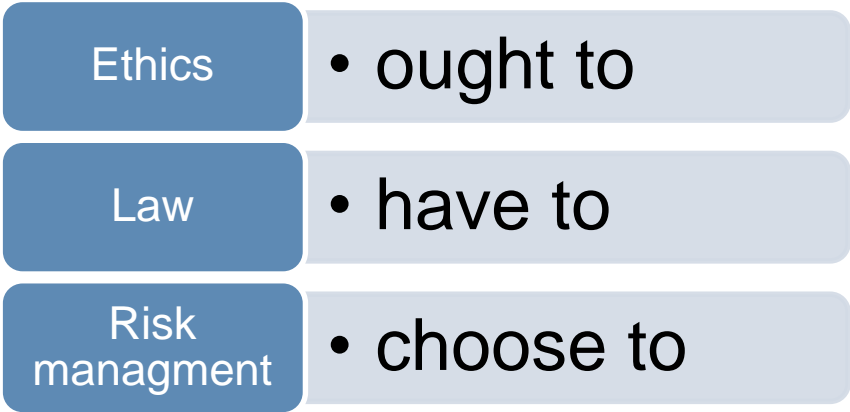
- *Ethics is normative in its prescribing*

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LINEAR

Ethics (identification of values - what ought to be)	Law (expression of values in social rules)	Risk Management (choices to reduce potential liability)

INTERCONNECTIDNESS

Discrete

Ethics	• ought to
Law	• have to
Risk managment	• choose to

Ethics

Law

Risk Managment

https://riseoftelehealth.wordpress.com/2016/01/30/ethical-considerations-in-the-creation-of-policy/
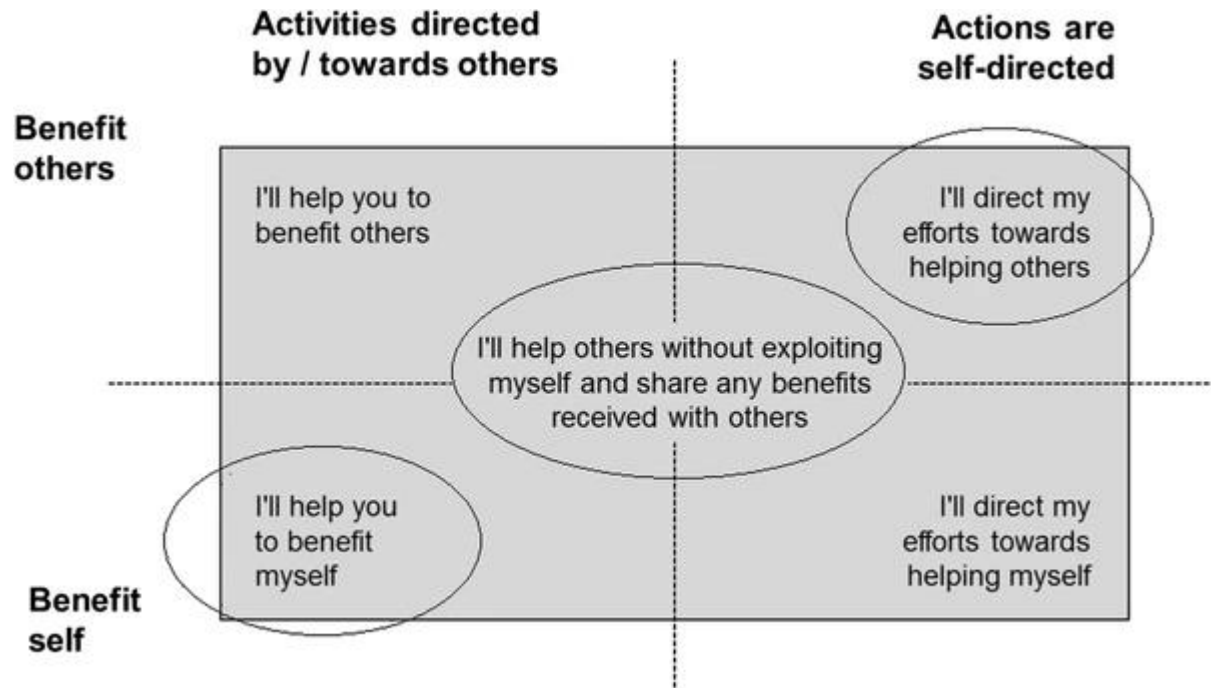
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Is this an Ethical Issue?

► Are you wondering what the right thing to do is, having doubts at the gut level?

► Are there strong differences of opinions within your team and are individual care/service providers taking different approaches?

► Do you feel caught between two or more obligations?

► Do you use expressions with in value words such as "it's patient/client/resident right to …" or it's not fair…"?

► Do multiple options seem right, or seem wrong?

► Is there is no clear policy, law, precedent or standard way forward?

► Are you concerned how to protect others from harm?

► Would you describe yourself and others feeling moral distress over an issue?

Ethical questions and issues can arise from care or service provision or corporate/business situations.

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A matrix of everyday interactions

Bull, M., Ridley-Duff, R. Towards an Appreciation of Ethics in Social Enterprise Business Models. J Bus Ethics 159, 619–63

"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"

http://www.sjn.us/blog/autonomy/

Are ethics challenges unique in community and home care settings?

YES, and NO!

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How to do good?

"You know, sometimes I feel like this. There I am standing by the shore of a swiftly moving river and I hear the cry of a drowning man. So I jump into the river, put my arms toward him, pull him to shore and apply artificial respiration. Just when he begins to breathe, there is another cry for help. So I jump into the river, reach him, pull him to shore, apply artificial respiration and then just as he begins to breathe there is another cry for help. So back in the river again, reaching, pulling, applying, breathing and then another yell. Again and again, without end, goes the sequence. You know, I am so busy jumping in and pulling them to shore, applying artificial respiration, that I have no time to see who the hell is upstream pushing them all in."

Michael Yeo, *Concepts and Cases in Nursing Ethics*, Broadview Press Limited 1991 (p.261).

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Why Is Ethics Valuable?

► Common principles and language to frame dilemmas in your work settings

► Hidden assumptions

► Permission to discuss moral aspects of care and service provision - idea of "moral distress"

► Provides an aid to decision making

► Helps guide actions when faced with uncertainty

► Supports patients/clients/residents, families and teams

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"Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage."

Maya Angelou

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Ethics Education Series for Community Service Providers

► Use "Raise Hand" feature, *or* type question in chat box

► If we didn't get to your question, please forward to:
regionalethics@HHSC.CA