to Commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Birth of HRH Princess Srinagarindra

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### Ethical Considerations of Emerging Nursing Research

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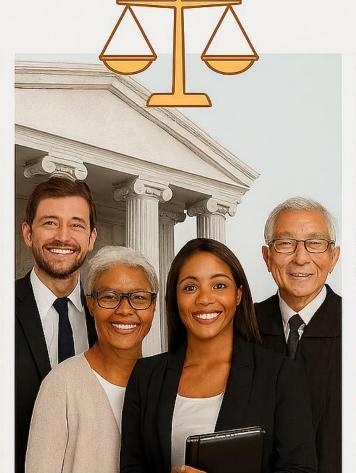


Nursing research at the intersection of technology, equity, and global health



### ethics in clinical nursing and community research











### WHO Policy on Misconduct in Research





### **Purpose of the Policy**

WHO defines research as generating knowledge to address health challenges because its sensitivity and visibility, public health, and trust in science. The policy outlines procedures for reporting, examining, and responding to misconduct.



### What Constitutes Wrongdoing in Research

Wrongdoing, as intentional fraudulent behavior. Examples include, risks to issues:

- Protocol development
- Conflicts of interest; data handling
- Authorship & peer review
- Ethics violations



### Wrongdoing vs. Poor Practice

Wrongdoing: deliberate fraudulent behavior.

Poor practice: substandard conduct that may still harm public health



### Who the Policy Applies to

- All WHO staff involved in research
- WHO collaborators in or doing WHO-supported research



### **Reporting Suspected Wrongdoing**

Reporting is considered whistleblowing, protected under WHO's Whistleblowing and Protection against Retaliation policy.

Staff and collaborators have a duty to report suspicions

- To supervisors (if appropriate)
- The Integrity Hotline
- Directly to the WHO Ethics Office



#### **Process**

Allegations are handled by the Ethics team, Ethics Review Committee (ERC)



## Wrongdoing vs. Poor Practice

- ☐ Wrongdoing: deliberate fraudulent behavior
- ☐ Poor practice: substandard conduct that may still harm public health



Intentional, Knowing, or Reckless Fraudulent Behavior





### Ethical context of nursing research

- **Ethical Foundations**
- ☐ Nursing research follows the same ethical standards as all human research.
- ☐ The **Declaration of Helsinki (1964)** established three core principles:

Respect for persons: participants' welfare takes precedence over researchers,

society, or science.

Beneficence: maximizing benefits to society while minimizing risks to participants

Justice: ensure fairness, avoid exploitation or disadvantage

- **Historical Lessons**
- ☐ Past unethical studies (e.g., **Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment**, **1932–1972**) highlighted the need for strict ethical review processes.
- **Ethical Oversight**
- ☐ Research must show approval or exemption from an ethics committee (IRB, REB, etc.).
- ☐ Approval numbers are often required for publication.

Heale & Shorten, 2017

## Ethical context of nursing research

### **Core Ethical Principles in Practice**

- ☐ Minimizing harm: strategies must be specified and implemented.
- ☐ **Informed consent:** voluntary participation, clarity of role, risks, benefits, and right to withdraw.
- ☐ Confidentiality & anonymity: secure data storage, protection of identity, clear retention/sharing protocols.

### **Special Circumstances**

- Observation studies: informing participants may alter behavior.
- □ **Deception studies:** sometimes used to avoid bias, but must minimize harm.
- **□** Vulnerable groups:

Children, patients with dementia (cannot provide consent).

Prisoners (risk of exploitation).

Indigenous peoples: require community engagement to ensure cultural relevance, respect, and benefit.

### 6 Nursing Practice Link

- ☐ Ethical principles in research are a **natural extension of nursing practice ethics**.
- ☐ Applying these principles ensures high-quality, trustworthy evidence for practice.

### ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN NURSING STUDIES

(Karjalian, Heydarzadeh, Davoodi, 2024)

#### Aim & Method

• Scoping review of ethical challenges in nursing research (2000–2023).

#### **Key Ethical Challenges**

• Arksey & O'Malley framework; 69 articles screened, 21 included in analysis

### **KEY ETHICAL CHALLENGES**



### **Autonomy**

 Informed consent violated in ICU/unconscious patients



#### **Beneficence**

Ensuring patient benefit vs. research demands



#### **Justice**

 Fair treatment, avoiding exclusion or deprivation of care



#### Confidentiality

 Protecting patient data and privacy often neglected

#### **Findings**

- Novice researchers experience most ethical dilemmas
- Transparency and patient/guardian education critical for consent
- Bioethics committees essential for fairness and oversight

#### Recommendation

- Adherence to ethical codes
- Continuous ethics training & workshops
- Anticipation of ethical conflicts of interest



# **Key Ethical Considerations**





Informed Consent in Complex Contexts



Data Privacy, Security, and Ownership



Equity in Research Design and Implementation



Responsible Integration of AI and Digital Technologies



Authorship, Integrity, and Global Collaboration

# Informed Consent in Complex Contexts



- □ Vulnerable populations, e.g., older adults with dementia, marginalized groups, low-resource communities.
- ☐ Digital consent challenges (AI platforms, online trials)
- ☐ Safeguards against coercion and misunderstanding

### **FUTURE CONCERN**

☐ Digital platforms and AI tools may obscure consent processes.

### **KEY POINT**

□ Need for culturally and linguistically concordant consent models, simplified digital consent, and safeguards against coercion.

# Data Privacy, Security, and Ownership



### **CHALLENGES**

☐ Explosion of health data from wearables, genomics, and AI-driven platforms



### **FUTURE CONCERN**

☐ Who owns patient-generated data? Risks of misuse, bias, or surveillance



### **KEY POINT**

- ☐ Advocate for transparent data governance, equitable access, and strict privacy protections
- ☐ Ensure equitable data ownership and benefit sharing

# **Equity in Research Design and Implementation**





### **CHALLENGES**

☐ Persistent disparities in health outcomes for LGBTQ+, elderly, and underserved populations.



### **FUTURE CONCERN**

☐ Risk of digital devices in technology adoption that benefits only privileged groups.



### **KEY POINT**

☐ Ethical imperative to design inclusive, culturally sensitive research that bridges rather than widens gaps.



# Responsible Integration of AI and Digital Technologies





Challenges: AI in clinical decision-making, education, and research



**Future concern:** Algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, over-reliance on technology



**Key point:** Nurses must be trained in AI literacy, ensure human-centered values, and demand accountability in digital innovation.

# Authorship, Integrity, and Global Collaboration





Challenges: Increasing cross-border, multisectoral research growth



**Future concern:** Authorship disputes, exploitation of researchers in low-resource settings, funding opacity.



**Key point:** Promote fairness, inclusivity, and clear authorship guidelines; strengthen IRB roles globally.



### **CONCLUSION**

Ethics in emerging nursing research must balance innovation with human dignity, equity, and transparency.





### Ethical Nursing Research =

Innovation + Human Dignity + Equity + Transparency

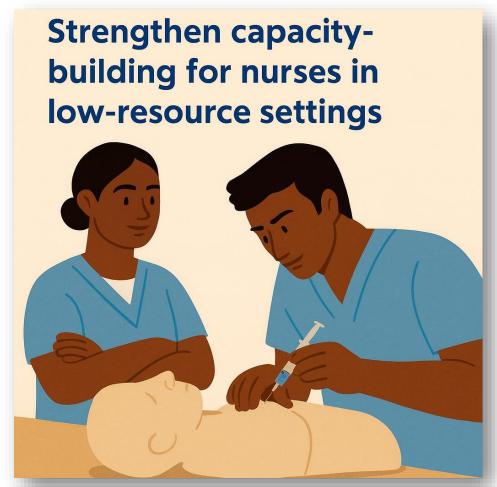
### Call for Action

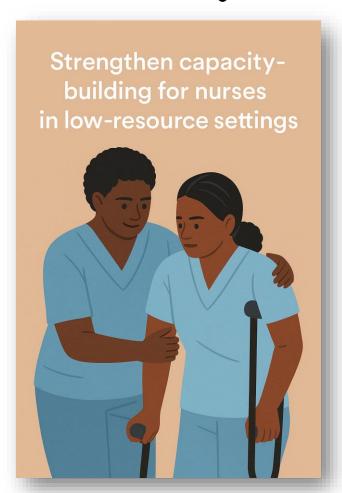


# Call for Action



## Call for Action ©





## Call for Action







### Take Home Message



Clinical research demands strict protection of human rights, while community research requires deep respect for collective values and cultural contexts. Both need tailored ethical frameworks.



Nurses are not only implementers of research, but also are ethical agents guiding the future of global health.



The future of nursing research will be judged not only by its innovations, but by its integrity.

"Ethics first, equity always, innovation with humanity"



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