

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Nursing

Course Number: NUR 502

Course Title: Contemporary Issues in Health Care Delivery

Credits: 2 S.H.

Placement: FOUNDATIONAL CORE

Pre-requisites: None

Course Description:

Overview of contemporary issues related to the organization and financing of health care delivery, with an analysis of the development and implementation of health care policy and its impact in shaping health care delivery. Analysis of ethical issues within the context of a changing health care delivery system, with an emphasis on the impact of technological advances and cost-containment measures on ethical issues and decision making.

Student learning outcomes:

1. Describe the organization of various health care delivery systems, including community- and population-based systems.
2. Discuss the economic implications of health planning for the organization of personnel and resources, the design and implementation of payment systems, and the outcome analysis of health care delivery and cost-effectiveness of services.
3. Differentiate between legislative and regulatory processes in the formulation of health care policy.
4. Evaluate local, state, and national socioeconomic and health policy issues and trends.
5. Articulate health care issues related to the organization, financing, and delivery of health care services.
6. Identify and analyze common ethical dilemmas in health care delivery and the ways in which these dilemmas impact on client care.
7. Evaluate alternative models of ethical decision-making.

8. Explore ethical conflicts and their resolution from both a personal and organizational perspective

Content Outline:

I. Organization of the Health Care Delivery System

- A. Historical roots
- B. Philosophical perspectives
- C. Pressures for reform
 - 1. Economic concerns
 - 2. Political responses
 - a. legislative
 - b. regulatory
 - c. consumers
 - d. professionals
 - e. third-party payers
 - f. accreditors
 - 3. Social issues
 - 4. Legal issues
 - 5. Ethical issues
 - 6. Technological change
- D. Emerging delivery systems
 - 1. Acute care systems
 - 2. Community-based systems
 - 3. Managed care
 - 4. Integrated systems
- E. Provider roles and interactions
- F. Quality monitoring and feedback mechanisms

II. The Nursing Profession

- A. Historical roots
- B. Philosophical perspectives
- C. Regulatory issues
- D. The delegation dilemma
- E. Professional support systems and structures
- F. Evolution of advanced practice roles
 - 1. Nursing management
 - 2. Nursing education
 - 3. Expanded and extended roles

III. Health Care Financing

- A. Economic implications of health planning
- B. Reengineering and work design

1. Organization of personnel
 - a. organizational structures
 - b. position descriptions
 - c. the delegation dilemma
2. Staff morale and productivity
3. Impact on health care outcomes
- C. Allocating resources for health care delivery
- D. Payment systems
 1. Design and budgeting issues
 2. Financing sources
 3. Coverage
 - a. client care needs
 - b. costs of care
 - c. operating expenses
 - d. profits
 4. Cash flow sufficiency
 5. Philosophical and political issues in determining extent of coverage
- E. Outcome analysis
 1. Health care delivery outcomes
 2. Cost-effectiveness of services
 3. Cost-efficiency of services
 4. Consumer satisfaction

IV. Health Care Policy

- A. Formulation of health care policy
 1. Legislative processes
 2. Regulatory processes
 3. Policy research
- B. Influencing health care policy
 1. Socioeconomic influences on health care policy
 - a. local, state, and national perspectives
 - b. influences on decision making
 - c. influences on implementation
 2. Articulation of health care issues
 - a. governmental officials
 - b. consumers
 - c. providers
 3. Consumer advocacy
- C. Health care policy in operation
 1. Regulatory controls
 2. Economic controls
 3. Quality controls
- D. Interpretation and evaluation of health policy research

V. Ethical Issues in Health Care

- A. Forces contributing to ethical dilemmas
 - 1. Technological advances
 - 2. Cost constraints
 - 3. Societal expectations
 - 4. Philosophical stances
 - 5. Records and reporting required by insurers
- B. Analysis of ethical dilemmas
 - 1. Anatomy of ethical dilemmas
 - 2. Context of ethical dilemmas
 - a. research
 - b. evaluation
 - c. clinical practice
 - d. management
 - 3. Alternative approaches to analysis
- C. Ethical decision making
 - 1. Sources of conflict
 - 2. Professional, political, regulatory, and legal responses
 - 3. Conflict management
 - 4. Conflict resolution
- D. Values clarification

Approved: June 1997