**Ethics and morality**

**Definitions**

Ethical and moral are two words that we encounter in our daily living. Perhaps the two words elaborate on an individual’s behavior, personality and attitude. Morals can be defined as a person’s religious, social and cultural values that define what is wrong and right. Morals are the standards and the laws made by the society to be followed by people while making a rightful decision (Pozgar & Santucci, 2015). Moral principles include being generous. On the other hand, ethics is a philosophical branch that defines how people should conduct themselves. It is a guiding principle in deciding on what is right or wrong. They are the standards guiding the life of an individual (Pozgar & Santucci, 2015). Example of moral principle includes integrity.

Moral dilemma also referred to as ethical dilemma, is a circumstance in which an individual is to decide between two options. Neither of the options can lead to a satisfactory decision. For instance, Jane a fourteen-year-old girl is raped on her way from school. She is later taken to hospital for treatment. When she is tested, she is found to be pregnant. There are two options, either to terminate the pregnancy or to leave it. If the doctors fail to terminate the pregnancy, Jane will not be able to continue with her studies while pregnant. The doctors can decide to terminate the fetus so that Jane can continue with her studies. From the situation, a decision made can be morally an acceptable/not acceptable. Should the doctor save the baby or Jane’s education?

**Application of ethical theories and principles**

Ethical theories can be applied in decision-making. Teleology theory, states that a valuable situation is determined by its repercussion. Teleology relies on the principle of utility. According to the principle of utility, any action can be beneficial if it results in the greatest values for a group of people, involved in a particular situation (Pozgar & Santucci, 2015). From Jane’s current situation the doctor should terminate the pregnancy to protect Jane from an unplanned pregnancy.

Ethical principles are applied to make sure all people are entitled to care and safety. Ethical principles are four, but the best that can be applied in this case  is non-maleficence. It means, does no harm. All decision practitioners must consider this principle as the end goal (Pozgar & Santucci, 2015). It means that all health practitioners should put into consideration whether decision made can harm people in the society. This is despite the decision being made for the benefit of individual people. From Jane’s situation, the doctor should put into consideration the reactions of the people.

**Reflection**

Ethics and morality are instilled in us through education and by the society respectively. The reason why people need knowledge of morals and ethics is to help in decision-making. At times, we are faced with situations that are difficult to decide. It is with these ethical theories and principles that we make painful decision that can benefit a large group of people. The decision made can also be of benefit to the individual patient. In the health sector, ethical theories and principles are of importance to the health practitioners. They deny themselves to help the patient.

**References**

Pozgar, G. D., & Santucci, N. (2015). *Legal Aspects of Health Care Administration*. Jones & Bartlett Publishers.