



Article

## Current Issues of Surgical Ethics and Deontology

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**Abstract:** Surgery is a medically extraordinary procedure which is directly involved with the human body and in most cases, has a direct impact on the emotional and psychological state of the patient. Hence, technical skills are not enough for successful treatment. The ethical responsibility, professional integrity and respect based on the deontological principle still play an important role in the surgery. The article explores the ethical and deontological aspects of contemporary surgery and the significance of ethics in connection with surgeons, patients, relatives and medical colleagues. Special emphasis is paid to the moral characteristics to be developed during the surgeon's career: Responsibility, compassion, courage, self-discipline and respect for human dignity. The lessons to be learned from historical examples and reflections from famous doctors and scientists underscore that surgical excellence is not only about knowledge and technical skill but also about humanity and caring for the patient. The paper highlights the importance of the contribution of science, experience, ethics, and concern for the individual patient in surgical success.

**Keywords:** Surgery, medical ethics, deontology, professionalism, patient care, surgeon.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A unique moral obligation has always been placed on the medical profession. Physicians put themselves in the position to take care of patients, their hopes, and sometimes their lives. This responsibility is crucial when making decisions in surgery, especially when they must be made quickly and have significant impact. Medical Deontology is the principles and standards that control the professional behavior in medical care. It includes the duties of medical people to patients, their families, their colleagues and the community. Medical ethics is closely related to deontology and is the study of moral principles, professional obligations, and the ethics of medical practice [1]. The ethical ideals of medicine can be traced back to ancient times. The Hippocratic principles, still current today, were laid down, such as the respect of life, avoiding harm, and caring for the patient's welfare, and protecting his/her confidentiality. While the science and technology of medicine have undergone tremendous transformation, these ethical principles remain central to doctors' practice today. Ethical issues become even more important within surgery, as there is always a risk with surgical procedures. The surgeon is, therefore, expected to use scientific knowledge and reasoning, clinical judgments, technical skills and moral responsibility in all aspects of patient care [2].

### 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This work is an analytical study of historical, philosophical and medical literature on professional ethics, and surgical deontology. Important texts by well-known physicians, scientists, and medical thinkers were studied to determine the basic ethical tenets incorporated into surgery [3].

The analysis covered the influence of Hippocrates, Avicenna, Ivan Pavlov, Sergei Yudin, Nikolai Burdenko, Nikolai Petrov, Vladimir Oppel, Charles Richet and other influential doctors whose thoughts and ideas have a permanent impact on the progress of medical ethics and professional conduct [4].

A comparative study of their opinion was done to assess the changes in their perception of ethical principles and their continued importance in modern surgical practice [5].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The operating room is not the only place where the surgeon's work takes place. Surgical success is often equated with the mastery of technique, but the real value of surgery is its service to the patient. Each incision, procedure, and decision is made in a person's life has an impact on them: not just physically, but emotionally and psychologically, as well [6].

Surgical deontology came about because of the recognition that a surgeon's responsibilities in medicine go beyond scientific knowledge. It was coined by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, who applied it to the science of moral obligation. In medicine, deontology began to take on the moral norms which govern the conduct of medical practitioners with respect to their patients [7].

Surgical deontology can thus be considered as the set of professional principles which should be followed to achieve the greatest therapeutic benefit with the least amount of physical and psychological harm. This allows for the understanding that one careless word can negatively impact a patient's confidence, emotional stability or willingness to follow through with treatment [8].

A surgeon's and a patient's relationship is based on trust. Often, patients feel anxious, uncertain and vulnerable before surgery. In such situations, the surgeon's words, actions and attitude can be therapeutic. Anxiety can be significantly decreased, and treatment outcomes improved, with professional communication, empathy and honesty [9].

Meanwhile, there is no science without practical work in surgery. If the surgeon is only one who performs surgery on a technical basis, there is a great danger of it making serious mistakes. On the other hand, scientific studies, which are disconnected from the clinical world, may become less useful. There has to be a constant interaction between theory and practice in good surgery - science guides clinical decisions and clinical experiences drive further scientific development.

The development of intellect and character has been stressed by many eminent physicians as of great value for the practice of surgery. For scientific work, Ivan Pavlov pointed out, one needs extraordinary dedication and perseverance. Such qualities are especially significant for those who are surgeons as their decision making often has immediate and irreversible consequences [10].

Sergei Yudin pointed out the need to combine analytical thinking with accuracy of hand skills. His view of a genuine surgical creativity comes from the fusion of technical excellence and scientific reason. The surgeon, consequently, needs to be dexterous, competent, and critical and responsible under stress. The most significant attributes a surgeon must possess in his/her job include responsibility, self-criticism, courage, determination and emotional stability. The surgeon should never put his own interests or convenience before the patient's. This is the ethical tenet of medical professionalism [11].

There are many examples throughout history to show us how vital humility and responsibility are in medicine. The experiences of great surgeons show that success in the profession should never breed the spirit of arrogance or complacency. Each achievement should be supported by good self-evaluation and a desire for improvement [12].

Recall that professional courage is not synonymous with recklessness. True valor is to make tough choices based on information, experience, and analysis, even in an environment of uncertainty and risk. This is especially important in surgery, where inaction can be a threat to a patient's life, as can rash-action. One of the other key elements of surgical ethics is interprofessional relationships. Professional collegiality and respect for others help to create a positive clinical environment and take care of patient care. Healthcare professionals, especially doctors, nurses, and others, can achieve these outcomes through constructive collaboration [13].

The importance of communication has been understood from ancient times in medicine. Ancient doctors often talked about that the healing was more than just drugs and operating room tools. The word of the physician is medicine in and of itself. There are three key elements that a surgeon needs to be able to do: explain medical information clearly, gain informed consent in an honest manner and assist patients in understanding why and what they can expect from their treatment [14].

These are the principles of medicine in action – treatment should not be standardized and treatment should be individualized – treatment should fit the patient, not the patient treatment. The medical, psychological, and social situations of each patient are complex and are important factors to take into account when deciding treatment. Great surgeons have expressed the same philosophy: "Do unto others as you would be done by – or as you would want done unto you. This attitude fosters compassion, consistency of morals, and professional integrity [15].

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Surgery is one of the most challenging and held accountable areas of medicine. Advanced scientific knowledge and technical expertise is not sufficient, and an ethical framework is also required. The surgeon's professional task is not restricted to the treatment of disease and encompasses the care of human dignity, emotional health and quality of life. Responsibility, compassion, courage, integrity and lifelong learning are the cornerstones of surgical success. Ethical principles and deontological standards are essential for making sure that the surgery is aimed at the patient's well-being and that the public will trust the medical community.

Despite the ongoing advances of technology in modern healthcare, the humanistic values of medicine continue to be of great importance. The aspiring surgeon is thus faced with a challenge to achieve excellence, not merely in the ability to operate, but in the moral qualities as well, for good professionalism is the sum total of knowledge, morality and humanity.

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