

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING BIOETHICS IN MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: The purpose of teaching bioethics in medical universities is related to addressing problems in the field of medicine. These include issues such as experiments conducted on humans, protecting patients' rights, the abortion debate, various aspects of infertility treatment, the euthanasia dilemma, concerns regarding the use of genetically modified products, transplantation challenges, and others that can be cited as examples.

Keywords: Medical School, Bioethics, and Law.

The term "bioethics" (from Greek bios - life, ethika - custom, habit) was first used by the American biologist-biochemist and oncologist Van Rensselaer Potter (1911-2001) in his works "Bioethics: A Bridge to the Future" (1969) and "Bioethics: The Science of Survival" (1970). Biological knowledge and universal human values are two of the most important and essential elements for addressing the long-term consequences of scientific and technological progress, especially the problems of preserving life in the field of biomedical technologies and ecology. Over time, the term "bioethics" began to be used in scientific and educational literature mainly in the sense given by American obstetrician and embryologist André Hellegers, who emphasized the interdisciplinary nature of research related to the ethical problems of biomedicine, primarily the need to protect the dignity and rights of patients. Thus, the main foundation of bioethics is the conflict of interests, rights, and moral principles, as currently the norms of traditional medical ethics do not function systematically.

Bioethics and law have always been interconnected in addressing issues concerning the beginning and end of human life, and medical intervention. With the development of biotechnology, the field of connection between legal and bioethical issues has expanded so much that new interdisciplinary scientific directions have emerged.

It is known that all the rules of ethics and deontology were traditionally based on morality, ethical codes, moral traditions, public opinion, etc., meaning they were not mandatory, but rather recommendatory and based on the theory of benevolence. Bioethics represented a new stage in the ethics and deontology of medical professionals. In bioethics, many rules transitioned to a legal basis and began to be enshrined in law, thus becoming mandatory.

Bioethics is typically taught at the initial stage of education, when most students are familiar with medicine only as patients, and many ethical issues of healthcare that arise in practice are completely unknown to them. This is undoubtedly a positive phenomenon, as first-year students have not yet encountered the excessive specialization and technicalization of modern medicine. However, it should be remembered that the formation of moral qualities in future doctors requires an interdisciplinary approach, implying the continuity and consistency of the educational process, and the unity of upbringing. Basic knowledge of bioethics should be acquired during the study period. Therefore, after the first theoretical level of bioethical education comes professional education, which includes the consistent expansion, deepening, and application of knowledge in the field of bioethics throughout the process of studying clinical sciences.

In general, bioethics exists more as an ever-expanding and complex field of moral and legal problems, usually without simple and clear solutions, rather than as a scientific discipline with a

rigid and universally accepted conceptual framework. There are many versions of bioethics that differ radically from each other on the most important points.

Therefore, we believe that the subject of bioethics should be taught at the Department of Forensic Medicine and Medical Law. This department is connected with all clinical fields.

Currently, students in the department (in the disciplines of Bioethics, Forensic Medicine, and Medical Law) are trained by teachers with medical and legal education, which involves the continuous study of ethical, legal, and medical issues. When teaching bioethics, not only purely moral problems are considered, but also related legal issues. In the topic "Forensic Science in Medicine," along with matters directly related to forensic medical examination, issues of medical ethics and medical law are also highlighted.

Therefore, we consider it appropriate to teach bioethics and legal studies in clinical departments, as this provides students with the most optimal option for developing an interdisciplinary understanding and interconnection of ethical and legal problems in modern healthcare. This contributes to clinical thinking, planning and solving problems of their professional and personal development, and the application of ethical and legal norms in practice.

When implementing programs in the forensic medicine specialty, real clinical situations related to bioethics are examined in the educational process. For example, conducting commission forensic medical examinations regarding professional misconduct of medical workers, based on a systematic approach to develop solutions for action in each specific situation. This allows for a detailed analysis of these cases to develop skills in critical analysis of problematic situations. This, in turn, has a significant impact on the prevention of professional errors.

From the above, it can be concluded that in addition to pedagogical activities, the staff of the Department of Forensic Medicine and Medical Law also carry out activities in the field of forensic medical examination. They objectively understand the current problems and needs of healthcare related to medical malpractice, cases of commission forensic medical examination, which directly allows for the study of these issues. Bioethics and medical law should be studied, analyzed, and interpreted simultaneously in this context.

Our department has gained substantial experience through practical observations, research conducted by department staff and students within the framework of scientific works and conferences, as well as through the experience of other higher educational institutions based on programs implementing these disciplines. Considering that our department was among the first to teach bioethics at the Department of Forensic Medicine and Medical Law, we believe it is appropriate to take our experience into account. While adequately addressing the fundamentals and general issues of the studied disciplines, we consider it most effective to teach bioethics in both the initial and final years of study, tailoring the approach to the specifics of particular clinical disciplines in the later years.

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