

Social Work Ethics and Pain Management

What are ethics? According to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, ethics is "the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation; a set of moral principles or values; the principles of conduct governing an individual or a group."

Why are we concerned about ethics? Ethics provides us with standards and guidelines for how we live our lives, how we conduct ourselves in our work, for evaluating our profession and for evaluating our colleagues' behaviors. In other words, ethics help us to do the "right thing".

This course reviews the NASW Code of Ethics and gives opportunities to evaluate our own work performance against these standards.

Why is it important to understand pain and pain management? Pain is often misunderstood and highly subjective. Chronic pain becomes central in one's life. Pain relief becomes the most important aspect of life and is often misunderstood by health care professionals. It can appear to be attention seeking, drug seeking, or psychologically based. Often there is no clearly identifiable cause by objective testing by medical technology.

This course reviews causes of chronic pain and gives the practitioner some guidelines for assisting clients in principles of pain management.

Licensing:

This course fulfills the Michigan Social Work Licensing Board's requirements for licensure renewal.

Contact Hours:

This course has a total of 6 educational contact hours.

Day 1: (8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

- What are Ethics?
- NASW Ethical Principles
- NASW Ethical Standards
- NASW Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues
- NASW Ethical Responsibilities to the Workplace
- Types of Pain
- Causes of Pain
- Pain Management

Learning Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

1. identify three ethical dilemmas related to their work
2. demonstrate a model for ethical decision making
3. list three elements of conflict between personal values and professional ethics
4. define chronic pain
5. identify two differences between physical pain and psychological pain
6. list four key parts of a pain management plan

Learning Materials:

The instructor will supply handouts of the PowerPoint presentation used in this course. Lecture and discussion will be the main learning activities, along with the extensive use of small group activities.

Assignments:

Participants are encouraged to actively engage in discussion with the instructor and other participants during interactive segments of the course.

Evaluation:

Depending on the requirements of the hosting organization, there may be a short post-test of the material at the end of the seminar. There will be an opportunity for the participants to complete an evaluation of the course.