



**LEGAL AND ETHICAL
ISSUES IN PSYCHIATRY**

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INTRODUCTION

- Mental disorders sometimes affect a person's ability to make decisions about his or her health and well-being.
- Nurses make many decisions each day which are affected by laws and ethical principles.
- It is important to be familiar with federal and state laws pertaining to nursing practice in general, and psychiatric nursing in particular.

- **Ethics** -branch of philosophy that deals with systematic approaches to distinguish right from wrong behavior.
- **Right-**
A valid, legally recognize claim or entitlement, encompassing both freedom from government interference or discriminatory treatment and an entitlement to a benefit or service.

-Levy & Rubenstein,1996

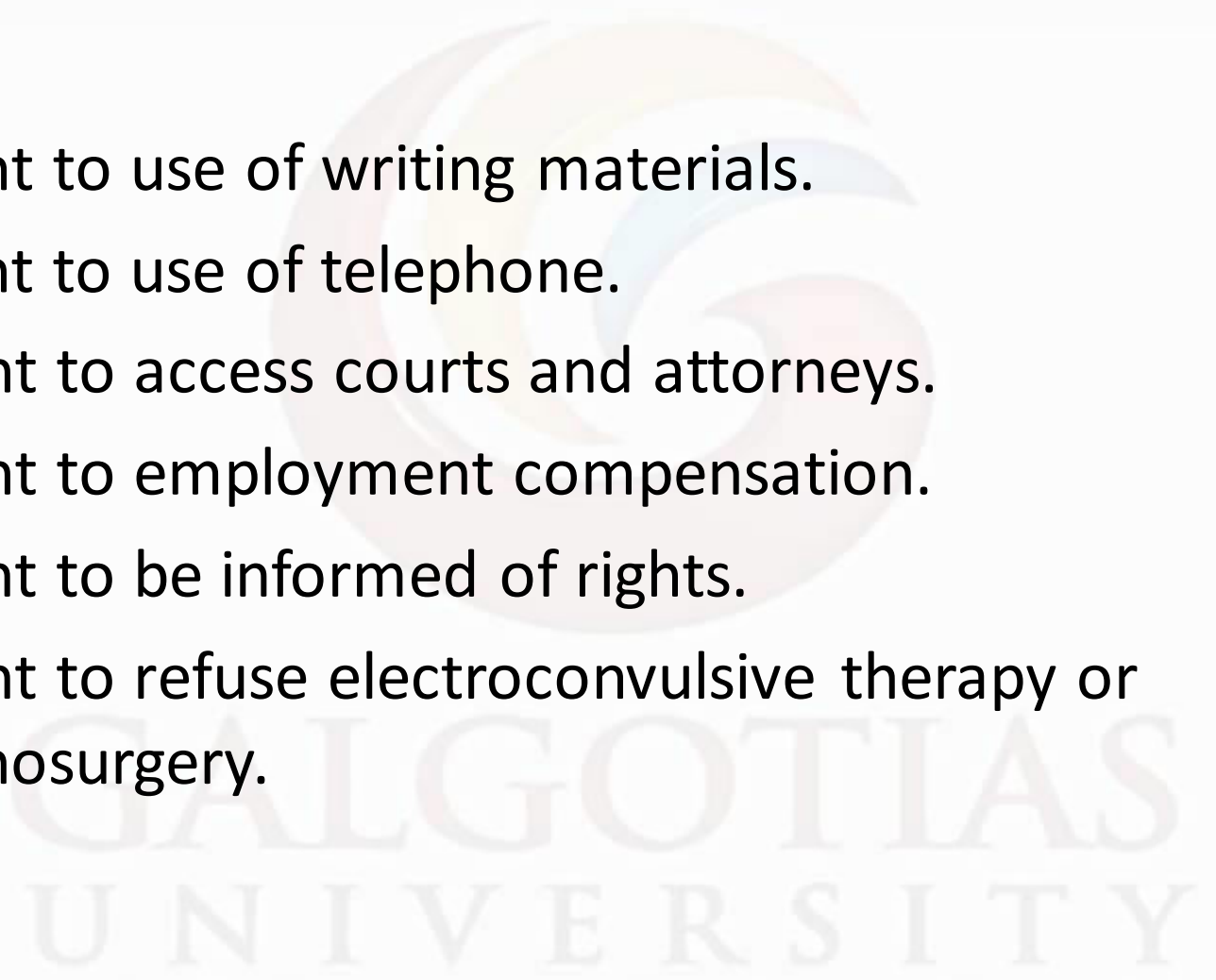
- Physically or mentally ill individuals are in a dependent position when hospitalized.
- Accordingly, the legal systems have instituted laws to safeguard their well-being.
- Laws regarding mentally ill people differ from state to state, so it is important that nurses should be aware.
- Laws are developed by a society as an outcome of personal and professional values and ethics.

Client's Rights

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- 1) Right to treatment in the least restrictive alternative.
- 2) Right to confidentiality of records.
- 3) Right to freedom from restraints and seclusion.
- 4) Right to give or refuse consent to treatment.
- 5) Right to access to personal belongings.
- 6) Right to daily exercise.
- 7) Right to have visitors.

- 8) Right to use of writing materials.
- 9) Right to use of telephone.
- 10) Right to access courts and attorneys.
- 11) Right to employment compensation.
- 12) Right to be informed of rights.
- 13) Right to refuse electroconvulsive therapy or psychosurgery.



American holistic nurses' association code of ethics

- **Nursing care is unrestricted** by considerations of nationality, race, creed, color, age, sex, sexual preference, politics or social status.

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1) Nurses and Self

Holistic nurses strive to achieve harmony in their own lives and assist others striving to do the same.

2) Nurses and Client

The nurse's primary responsibility is to the client needing nursing care. The nurse strives to see the client as a whole, and provides care which is professionally appropriate and culturally consonant.

3) Nurses and Co-Workers

Nurses have a responsibility to nurture each other, and to assist nurses to work as a team in the interest of client care.

4) Nurses and Nursing Practice

Nurses have right to utilize all appropriate nursing interventions, and have the obligation to determine the efficacy and safety of all nursing actions.

5) Nurses and The Profession

Holistic nurses may assume a leadership position to guide the profession toward holism. Nurses support nursing research and the development of holistically oriented nursing theories.

6) Nurses and Society

The nurse, along with other citizens, has responsibility for initiating and supporting actions to meet the health and social needs of the public.

7) Nurses and The Environment

The nurse strives to manipulate the client's environment to become one of peace, harmony, and nurturance so that healing may take place.

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