Ethics for Safety and Health Professionals

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Agenda:

• COVID-19 & Ethics in the News
• Compare Industrial Hygiene and Public Health Codes of Ethics
• Share a few personal thoughts to optimize worker health amidst many ethical challenges
A pandemic ethical conundrum: Must health care workers risk their lives to treat Covid-19 patients?

By ALAN KADISH and JOHN LOIKE / JULY 24, 2020

Medical staff treat a patient in the Covid-19 intensive care unit at the United Memorial Medical Center in Houston.

The sweep of Covid-19 across the globe has raised a fundamental question about medical ethics: Do physicians, nurses, EMTs, and other health care workers have moral and legal obligations to risk their health and lives to treat patients during a pandemic? Ref:StatNews.com 24 July 2020

Many Ethical Challenges:

• Ethical Challenges of Working Safely

• Contact Tracing: Public Health vs. Privacy

• Strong differences of professional opinions

• Lack of official standards

• Limited resources (Money, Equipment, Staff, Time)

• How much risk should I take in my work?
ETHICS IN THE NEWS...

Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Mar 2020

Nursing profession rated by public in Gallop poll “the most ethical and honest” of any profession, 18 years in a row.


NCSL NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

Ref: 
https://www.ncsl.org/research/ethics/
ethics-in-the-news-
2020637139103.aspx

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2020 Ethics in the News

2019 Ethics in the News

2018 Ethics in the News

2017 Ethics in the News

2016 Ethics in the News

2015 Ethics in the News

February

United States - When the Gallup organization surveys Americans each year on which occupations they rate highest for honesty and ethics, the nursing profession has topped the list for 18 years, running. As a registered nurse for more than two decades and a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) for the last seven years, I am grateful for the trust patients place in us. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images) — but I also know that it’s time to modernize the way we view the role nurses play in the healthcare team. View Story.

Kentucky - The Kentucky House, rated Friday in strength of legislative ethics code, by adding sexual harassment to the list of violations. View Story.

Maine - A Republican member of the state ethics commission has stepped down, leaving the panel with just three of the five members it is authorized to have as Maine heads into the 2020 election cycle. View Story.

New Mexico - New Mexico’s new Ethics Commission reported Friday it had received no complaints so far about ethical issues and potential corruption involving public employees, contractors, lobbyists, and political candidates. View Story.

Vermont - Senators move a step closer Thursday to approving a code of ethics for state officials and lawmakers, but approving their code for state officials and lawmakers, an ethics commission created three years ago also remains at least a
Please tell me how you would rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields -- very high, high, average, low or very low?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
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<th>% Average</th>
<th>% Low/Very low</th>
<th>% No opinion</th>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>High school teachers</td>
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<td>Police officers</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountants</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funeral directors</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Journalists</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Building contractors</td>
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<tr>
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<td>44</td>
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<td>Members of Congress</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Gallup has measured the public’s views of the honesty and ethical standards of a variety of occupations since 1976. While the list changes from year to year, some professions have been included consistently over the past four decades.

Ref: https://news.gallup.com/poll/274673/nurses-continue-rate-highest-honesty-ethics.aspx
Comparing Codes of Ethics

BY CELIA A. BOOTH AND JOY ERDMAN

Last November, the American Public Health Association updated its code of ethics. This code is of interest to occupational health and safety professionals because many of us work in public health entities, including governmental, academic, and healthcare organizations; we should be familiar with the code because we are part of the larger, interdisciplinary field of public health. More importantly, the APHA code provides a detailed framework for decision-making that can help us weigh options when we face ethical dilemmas.

The focus of the APHA code on service to society is timely given the COVID-19 pandemic. Ethical dilemmas are occurring nearly every day as scarce resources are rationed, healthcare workers go into harm’s way, and populations are quarantined. These actions contravene the civil rights and liberties of individuals, disrupt the global economy, and obstruct the primary goal of public health, which is to allow people to flourish.

FOCUS ON VALUES

There are some key differences between the APHA code and the Board for Global EHS Credentialing code, which applies to industrial hygienists. While both public health and OHS protect the public, the APHA code also serves societies and the ecosystem. The main difference is that the BGC code of ethics is connected to the Certified Industrial Hygienist certification and includes an enforcement mechanism.

Both codes specify standards and obligations. As explained in its introduction, the APHA code applies to “both public health practitioners and institutions” and “is intended to guide individual and collective decision making.” However, APHA states that its code is not intended to be used in a disciplinary way. Instead, the code serves as a “promise to society,” stating, “When people become professionals, they take on a second set of special responsibilities and obligations concerning how and for what ends their professional knowledge and authority should be used.”

Further, the APHA code encompasses values that overlap with, and extend beyond, those of the industrial hygiene profession. In addition to professionalism, trust, health, and safety, the APHA code embraces justice and equity; interdependence and solidarity; human rights and civil liberties; and inclusivity and engagement. These values reflect the broader mission of public health, which is influenced by governmental, academic, healthcare, and non-governmental organizations.

The APHA code identifies four components of decision-making: determining the public health goals of a proposed action; identifying the ethically relevant facts and uncertainties; analyzing the meaning and implications of the action for the health and rights of affected individuals and communities; and analyzing how the proposed action fits with core public health values. In addition, the code lists eight considerations for public health interventions and policies: permissibility; respect; reciprocity; effectiveness; responsible use of scarce resources; proportionality; accountability and transparency; and public participation.

OVERLAPPING PROFESSIONS

There is considerable overlap between public health and industrial hygiene in investigating health problems; informing and educating; maintaining competency; and evaluating and continuously improving processes, programs, and interventions. Public health delves deeper into the population, community, and social components of these domains. Nonetheless, in each of these areas, industrial hygiene may contribute to the evidence-based practice of public health.

The complexity of the APHA code reflects the multidisciplinary nature of public health and provides a broad scope of standards for performance of duties. Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the actions taken by U.S. public health officials reflect the values, standards, and obligations in their code of ethics, even in the midst of a dynamic global event.
## Comparison of Public Health & Industrial Hygiene Codes of Ethics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serves:</strong></td>
<td>Individuals, societies, and ecosystems</td>
<td>Employees, employers, other clients, the IH profession and the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Health Agency Accreditation (Public Health Accreditation Board)</td>
<td>Individual Certification (ABIH/BGC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values, standards and obligations</td>
<td>Guidelines, standards and obligations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not intended for enforcement</td>
<td>Intended for enforcement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Optimizing Worker Health Amidst Many Ethical Challenges

- Read to get smarter on COVID-19 guidance
- Priorities: Remember the hierarchy of controls
- Collaborate with allied professionals
- Keep 2 lists/photos – what works and what doesn’t work (The Hall of Fame and Hall of Shame)
- Disagree with senior management politely (without losing your job)
- Refer to your CIH and CSP codes of ethics
- Consider other professionals’ codes of ethics

OSHANIOSHASSP AIHACDC

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

COVID-19 Latest Resources

Protecting Public Health and Safety Is Key

Latest Education

Pandemic Challenges: How to Return to Work

Coronavirus Outbreak Resource Center

Resuming Business TOOLKIT


WHO

OSHA   NIOSH   ASSP   AIHA   CDC   NIEHS
Board for Global Credentialing (BGC)

Code of Ethics

Effective

7/1/2020

Introduction

The Board for Global EHS Credentialing (BGC) maintains several EHS voluntary, non-profit, professional credentialing programs. BGC credentialing programs certify qualified environmental, health and safety (EHS) professionals who work to protect, manage, and enhance the health and safety of people and the environment, and who have met the professional knowledge standards established by the Board of Directors. Regardless of any other professional affiliation, the BGC Code of Ethics (Code) applies to each individual certified by BGC credentialing programs (certificants) and, such individual seeking certification (candidates).

The Code serves as the minimum ethical standards for the professional behavior of BGC certificants and candidates.

The Code is designed to provide appropriate ethical practice guidelines and enforceable standards of conduct for all certificants and candidates. The Code also serves as a professional resource for EHS professionals, as well as for those served by BGC certificants and candidates.

Preamble/General Guidelines

The BGC is dedicated to the implementation of appropriate professional standards designed to serve the public, employers, employees, clients and EHS professionals. First and foremost, certificants and candidates give priority to EHS interests related to the protection of people, workplaces and the natural environment. They are required to act in a manner that promotes integrity and reflects positively on the profession, consistent with accepted ethical and legal standards.

As EHS professionals, certificants and candidates have the obligation to:

- Maintain high standards of integrity and professional conduct
- Accept responsibility for their actions
- Continuously seek to maintain and/or enhance their professional capabilities
- Practice with fairness and honesty.

In order to retain their credentials, all those recognized by the BGC are required to act in a professional manner consistent with the certification standards and responsibilities set forth, below.

I. Responsibilities to BGC credentialing programs, the profession and the public.

A. Certificant and candidate compliance with all organizational rules, policies and legal requirements.

A certificant/candidate must:

1. Comply with laws, regulations, policies and ethical standards governing professional practice
2. Provide accurate and truthful representations concerning certification and recertification information.
3. Maintain the security of BGC examination information and materials, including the prevention of unauthorized disclosures of test information.
4. Cooperate with BGC concerning ethics matters and the collection of information related to an ethics matter.
5. Report, upon a reasonable and clear factual basis, apparent violations of the ethics code by certificants and candidates.

B. Education, experience, competency and performance of professional services.

A certificant/candidate must:

1. Deliver competent services with objective and independent professional judgment in decision-making.
2. Recognize the limitations of one’s professional ability and provide services only when qualified.
3. Provide accurate and truthful representations concerning costs, services and expected results.
4. Cooperate with BGC concerning ethics matters and the collection of information related to an ethics matter.
5. Report, upon a reasonable and clear factual basis, apparent violations of the ethics code by certificants and candidates.

C. Public health, safety and the natural environment. A certificant/candidate must:

1. Follow appropriate health and safety procedures, in the course of performing professional duties, to protect clients, employers, employees and the public from conditions where injury and damage are reasonably foreseeable.

Any violation of the preceding numbered requirements may result in sanctions up to and including the suspension or removal of credentials awarded by the BGC.

Doc: bgc code of ethics 2019-11-18-final approved.doc
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Other Professional Codes of Ethics

ICOH: http://www.icohweb.org/site/code-of-ethics.asp

Attorneys:

Engineers - Civil Engineer: http://www.asce.org/code_of_ethics/

Federal Gov’t (EPA, FEMA, etc.):
https://www.oge.gov/Web/oge.nsf/0/076ABBBFC3B026A785257F14006929A2/$FILE/SOC%20as%20of%2081%20FR%2081641%20FINAL.pdf and


Religious Leaders: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Rule and
https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Commandments

University/Academia http://www.aaup.org/report/statement-professional-ethi
How will COVID-19 ethical issues play out?

Real-world ethical dilemmas are gut-wrenching, life-changing experiences that require you to put yourself in harm’s way to do the right thing. What class in ethics is teaching students that fact?

Flint MI - 2016

Flint water crisis: Michigan ‘agrees to pay $600m’

From physician to felon: A doctor warns how easy it is to be bribed

WBEZ 91.5 Chicago

How can safety & health professionals help?
Always walk through life as if you have something new to learn and you will.

- Vernon Howard

Thank You for attending
I look forward to the discussion later today!

✓ Ethics in the News
✓ Compare IH & PH Codes of Ethics
✓ Optimizing Worker health

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