

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER, DECEMBER 2009

COURSE: ETHOS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN MIDWIFERY

COURSE CODE: MID 104

TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

TOTAL MARKS: 75 MARKS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- THIS PAPER IS COMPRISED OF TWO SECTIONS.
- SECTION A IS COMPULSORY
- ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS OF YOUR CHOICE IN SECTION B

Section A

Answer all questions

Question 1

Select the most appropriate response in the following multiple choice questions.

Selected responses should be indicated on the answer sheet e.g. 1.4 d

1.1 The significance of cultural safety in midwifery is outlined in one of the following statements.

- a. It ensures that consumers of the care are cared for in a manner that is compliant with their culture, and not against it.
- b. It ensures that midwives are aware of the culture of their clients.
- c. It promotes assimilation of the client's health care culture into the midwife's culture of health care.
- d. None of the above

1.2 All of the following statements are true about midwifery partnership relationships, except one. Which one is false?

- a. In the midwifery partnership relationship, power is shared equally between the midwife and the client.
- b. The midwife is an expert in his/her field of midwifery practice whilst the woman is considered an expert in the knowledge of herself.
- c. For the midwifery partnership relationship to work, both the midwife and the woman should share information and knowledge.
- d. The midwife remains the expert in the relationship who has the right to autonomously make decisions related to the pregnancy on behalf of the woman who is not an expert in midwifery and therefore not accountable.

1.3 Identify the unique philosophy of midwifery that enables the midwifery profession to stand out from other professions that are involved in childbirth.

- a. Care during childbirth should be woman centred.
- b. There should be continuity of caregiver in the dispensation of maternity care.
- c. Midwifery profession is autonomous

- d. Pregnancy, labour, and birth, are normal physiological processes.
- e. Midwifery is one of the oldest professions of all time, much older than obstetrics.

1.4 Women undergoing childbirth are regarded as similar. They are therefore expected to respond uniformly during pregnancy, labour and birth. Which of the following models of care are best suited by this perception?

- a. The midwifery model of maternity care
- b. The medical model of maternity care
- c. The nursing model of maternity care
- d. None of the above
- e. All of the above.

1.5 Absolute autonomy in professional midwifery practice is best experienced in which one of the following models of midwifery care?

- a. Team midwifery practice
- b. Shared care
- c. Independent midwifery practice
- d. Case load midwifery practice

A midwife has been approached by her pregnant neighbour, requesting her to support her in her planned home delivery. After assessing the woman, the midwife declines to take up the woman as her client in a home birth and advises her that a home birth would not be a safe option for her. One day, the unsuspecting midwife gets an urgent call from the family of her pregnant neighbour, requesting the midwife to assist the woman who was then appearing to be experiencing difficulty in the labour and birth that she was having in her home. Question 1.6 to 1.10 relates to this scenario.

1.6 Which one of the following should be the midwife's primary action?

- a. The midwife should not attend to her neighbour because she assessed the woman earlier.

- b. The midwife should attend to the woman because it is her responsibility to offer emergency midwifery care to pregnant women in the community.
- c. The midwife should inform the neighbours' family that she saw the woman earlier and told her that a home birth would be difficult.
- d. The midwife should tell the family to look for another midwife or obstetrician

1.7 If the midwife decided not to attend to the woman at all, the midwife would be justified in her actions because;

- a. The midwife has a right to refuse care to clients with whom no midwife-client relationship has been established
- b. The midwife pre-empted to the woman prior that a home birth was not advised in her pregnancy after a careful assessment.
- c. All of the above
- d. None of the above

1.8 The professional responsibility of the midwife dictates that the midwife should;

- a. Not attend to the woman because she is accountable for her professional judgement and actions which she exercised when declining earlier.
- b. Attend to the woman because the call is an emergency.
- c. Honour the right of the woman to choose a health care practitioner of her choice to access childbirth care, which in this case is the midwife in question.
- d. Exercise her right as a midwife not to offer care to clients if she wishes not to.

1.9 The midwife in question decided to attend to her neighbour when called unsuspectingly. The woman unfortunately lost the baby during the course of the labour, and a fresh still born was the outcome. The family of the woman who lost the child then decided to sue the midwife for offering midwifery care where she was aware that such services would be insufficient to yield a positive pregnancy outcome, hence their demise of their baby. Which of the following statements would best stand in the defence of the midwife?

- a. The midwife acted responsibly in her capacity as a midwifery professional to administer emergency midwifery care to a woman in need in the community.
- b. The midwife had informed the woman prior that a home birth would not be in the best interest of herself and the baby.

- c. The woman and her family had brought the calamity upon themselves by ignoring the advice of the midwife prior to the commencement of labour.
- d. The death of the baby was not the midwife's fault, but an act of God. Had the midwife not intervened, things could have been worse.

1.10 Which of the following statements best describe the midwife in 1.9 above?

- a. The midwife demonstrated poor judgement in undertaking this task
- b. The midwife demonstrated sound clinical skills when tending to the woman during her labour.
- c. The midwife demonstrated conscientious professional behaviour by offering emergency midwifery care to her neighbour.
- d. All of the above

1.11 The midwife has the right to discharge a client from his care. Which of the following statements best reflect the corresponding duty/ responsibility of this right?

- a. The midwife should ensure that the client is in agreement with the discharge offered by the midwife.
- b. The midwife has the duty to ascertain that the client is no longer in need of the services offered by the midwife.
- c. The midwife should establish that the client is in good health, requiring no further care from any other health professional
- d. The midwife should extend adequate referral to other health care personnel.

1.12 Prejudice against a client primarily violates which of the following ethical principle?

- a. Justice
- b. Veracity
- c. Beneficence
- d. Maleficence
- e. All of the above

1.13 Confidentiality and anonymity are closely associated but dissimilar. Which of the following statements is true?

- a. When conducting interviews anonymity must be ensured
- b. When conducting interviews, confidentiality must be observed
- c. a and b above

d. Privacy, but not confidentiality must be observed

1.14 Which of the following is not covered in the scope of midwifery practice as defined by the ICM code of ethics?

- a. Midwives work to eliminate violations of ethical and human rights of women.
- b. Development and implementation of health policies relating to the wellbeing of women and children is part of midwifery practice.
- c. Detection of abnormalities in childbirth and the prescription of procedures to manage the abnormalities is part and parcel of midwifery practice.
- d. None of the above.

1.15 One of the following statements is true about the professional responsibility of a midwife. Which one is it?

- a. Midwives utilise their knowledge and skills to facilitate safe birthing in all cultures and environments.
- b. Midwives are professionally accountable for the care they give to women in pregnancy, and not for the care given to the newborn.
- c. The client for which the midwife is professionally accountable for includes the woman and her baby, but excludes her partner and family.
- d. Documentation should only be done where a midwife feels that the client might sue in the future.

A married pregnant woman volunteers to test for HIV during an ANC visit in a small community clinic. The woman tests positive for HIV but requests the midwife to keep the results confidential as she is afraid to disclose the news to her husband, fearing rejection. The midwife happens to know that the woman's husband has a pregnant girlfriend, unknown to the woman. The girlfriend in question has declined to take the HIV test stating that she is not ready to know her status despite the midwife's counsel. Questions 1.16 to 1.20 relate to this scenario.

1.16 The midwife in this situation should consider honouring the wishes of the woman because

- a. The woman has a right to self determination
- b. The woman has a right to privacy and confidentiality

- c. The principles of the midwifery-client relationship dictates that the midwife should honour the clients' wish at all costs
- d. None of the above

1.17 Absolute autonomy in this situation is questionable because;

- a. The absolute right to self determination is overridden by the risk posed to other individuals if it is honoured.
- b. The court of law has demanded that the midwife should disclose the results of the woman's HIV status.
- c. The woman, her husband and the unknown girlfriend will not benefit from a disclosure that has not been authorised by the woman.
- d. The woman may lose her husband due to stigmatisation, which may in-turn increase unwanted stress levels on the woman that could complicate her pregnancy.

1.18 The woman's request not to disclose the results of her HIV test primarily challenge which of the following rights or ethical responsibilities of the midwife.

- a. The midwife's right to a professional conscience
- b. The midwife's right to refuse care to a client
- c. The midwife's duty not to cause harm
- d. The midwife's duty to treat clients with respect, dignity and without prejudice

1.19 Which of the following rights support/ protect the woman's decision not to disclose her HIV status to her husband in-spite of the midwife's advice?

- a. The woman's right to freedom from coercion in decision making related to her health
- b. The woman's right to absolute privacy, except where that right is pre-empted by law
- c. The woman's right to an informed consent, after having all the information on which to base decision.
- d. All of the above

1.20 Which of the following would be the most appropriate action for the midwife to take given the circumstances?

- a. The midwife should call the husband discreetly, without the knowledge of the wife and inform him of his wife's HIV status.

- b. Go to the court of law and request a court order to disclose the results to all parties concerned, for the sake of their health.
- c. Be bold and at least alert the husband's girlfriend so that she can make a properly informed decision.
- d. None of the above

A midwife working in a labour unit supports a woman through a successful birth of a live normal neonate. The midwife is expected to give the newborn vitamin K prophylaxis injection intramuscularly as per the policy. The mother sees the midwife preparing to administer the injection and shows apprehensiveness of this procedure for fear of upsetting and harming the baby. The following questions relate to this circumstance.

1.21 The act of vitamin K administration to the newborn by the midwife is challenged by which of the following statements?

- a. The newborn's right to be afforded necessary treatment in the event of abnormality or illness.
- b. The right of the newborn to be spared any painful procedure that is not absolutely necessary for its health or wellbeing.
- c. The newborn's right to be born vaginally without any intervention, drugs, or any other aggressive obstetrical procedure, barring absolute health necessity.
- d. All of the above.

1.22 If the midwife decided not to administer vitamin K to the baby, which of the following statements would challenge that decision.

- a. The midwife is merely acting on behalf of her/his employer and has no authority to change the rules of how things are run.
- b. The midwife maintains her professional responsibility pertaining to decisions made during the course of his/her practice.
- c. The mother of the baby reserves the right to consent or not to consent on behalf of the newborn as the legal guardian.
- d. All of the above

1.23 The most appropriate primary action to be taken by the midwife in this circumstance would be to;

- a. Follow the policy of the labour unit and give the vitamin k prophylaxis to protect him/herself in case the newborn develops unanticipated complications.
- b. Make the woman sign a treatment-refusal form in front of the senior management of the labour unit.
- c. Give the woman an opportunity to consent the procedure of vitamin k administration to her newborn baby.
- d. Give the baby the vitamin K inspite of the woman's apprehension because the benefit of the procedure outweighs the mother's unfounded fears.

1.24 The pivotal ethical consideration when doing midwifery research involving human subjects is which one of the points?

- a. Non-maleficence
- b. Justice
- c. Beneficence
- d. Autonomy of the researcher

1.25 The order in which a midwifery researcher address ethical considerations when doing data collection in the field is;

- a. Accessing the sample, obtaining consent from participants, veracity, beneficence
- b. Obtaining consent from the participants, veracity, beneficence, accessing the sample
- c. Beneficence, obtaining consent from participants, veracity, accessing the sample
- d. Veracity, accessing the sample, beneficence, obtaining consent from the participants

(25 marks)

Section B

Answer any two questions of your choice in this section

Question 2

Zodwa is an independent midwife that is looking after Lucille who has just discovered that she is pregnant. As part of her midwifery care, Zodwa wants to do a physical examination on Lucille during her professional visit at Lucille's home. Lucille is a housewife who is alone at home during the midwife's visit.

2.1 What critical ethical consideration should Zodwa observe before she begins the physical examination procedure and why? (5 marks)

2.2 Discuss the ethical consideration Zodwa should observe in 1. (20 marks)

(25 marks)

Question 3

A midwife working in a busy labour unit requests a woman scheduled for a caesarean section to sign documents that authorise the labour unit to perform the operation on her. On the next day, the same midwife goes through the woman's hospital records and realises that there was a grammatical error that she had made on the document signed by the woman. The midwife decides to quickly and independently correct the error; after all, the midwife observes that the alteration will not necessarily change the grammatical meaning of what the woman signed for in the documents.

3.1 What are the ethical implications of the midwives actions? (20 marks)

3.2 Was it appropriate for the midwife to make the adjustment on the document at the time that the midwife did so? What should have been the midwife's course of action? (5 marks)

(25 marks)

Question 4

A midwifery student is conducting a study that involves collecting data from childbearing women who are the subjects of the study.

Discuss the ethical aspects that the midwifery student should consider during the conduction of the study.

(25 marks)