



UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI

FIRST SEMESTER RE-SIT EXAMINATION PAPER, JANUARY 2020

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

COURSE CODE: SWK231

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN SOCIAL WORK
PRACTICE

TIME ALLOWED: 2 HOURS

Instructions

1. The paper consists of six questions
2. Answer any three questions
3. All questions carry equal marks

Candidates may complete the front cover of their answer book when instructed by the Chief Invigilator and sign their examination attendance cards but must not write anything else until the start of the examination period is announced.

No electronic devices capable of storing and retrieving text, including electronic directories and any form of foreign material may be used while in the examination room.

Special Requirements

None

Additional Material (s)

None

DO NOT turn examination paper over until instructed to do so.

QUESTION 1

Case Study: Diana can't go out

Alexia Macedonia is a single parent, the mother of three children ranging in age from 7 to 16. Her oldest daughter, Diana, is a 16-year-old high school student. Until the beginning of this school year, she received good grades, but at midterm she was failing all courses. She seems to have lost all interest in school. For the past three weeks, she has not been in school at all.

Alexia is a clerical worker in the town's only industry. She goes to work early in the morning before her children leave for school and returns home late in the afternoon, hours after the children finish school. Alexia is a good home manager, but she has no friends.

Recently, Alexia turned to the local family service agency to ask for help. She told the social worker that she did not know what to do about Diana's skipping school and her poor grades. By talking with both Alexia and Diana, the social worker learned that Diana has to stay home every evening and every weekend because her mother does not want to be alone. Even though Diana wants to go out with her friends, her mother never allows her to do so.

Based on the case study discuss the following questions

- a) Who is the client? Whose interests should the social worker make a priority?
- b) Is it Diana or her mother, who made the initial request for help? Or both?
- c) Is it ethical for the social worker to intervene with Diana even though she has not asked for help and (on being contacted by the worker) claims to have no need for help?
- d) What other ethical considerations are evident in this case?

QUESTION 2

Examine a situation where you make exception to confidentiality and self-determination during the helping process. Use examples to support your views.

QUESTION 3

Case study: John Miller's return to state hospital

John Miller is seriously mentally ill and has been so diagnosed by several psychiatrists. For the past three years, this 21-year-old adult has been living at home with his elderly parents. He can take care of his own minimal needs, but he has no interest whatsoever in any personal contact. He spends most of the day sitting in the living room, staring either into empty space or at the TV. His parents dare not leave him home alone. They have approached you, John's social worker, requesting that you make arrangements to have him returned to the state hospital because they feel they can no longer give him the care he needs. You appreciate their situation, but you also know that returning John to a state hospital may harm him.

Based on the case above answer the following questions:

- a) What are the circumstances that would warrant you considering involuntary hospitalization?
- b) Suppose this case takes place in an isolated area where there are no alternative treatment possibilities; what should you do if John is unwilling to alter his life?
- c) How would your dilemma differ if the psychiatric diagnosis indicated that sooner or later John would inflict serious harm on others or himself, even though he has been entirely harmless until now?
- d) Where in the code can you find guidance as to whose needs take priority?

QUESTION 4

Ethical principles and rules are derived from societal values. Identify the relevant social work ethical principles for the following societal values:

- a) Cultural diversity
- b) Equality
- c) Freedom
- d) Integrity
- e) Knowledge building
- f) Privacy
- g) Social justice

QUESTION 5

As a social worker, if you had to choose between a child's right to confidentiality and a parent's right to know things that affect the child, how would you go about making this decision? What factors would influence your decision?

QUESTION 6

Case study: Serena Adams has herpes

At the Jeanette April residential treatment center for teenagers with emotional problems, the staff became aware that 15-year-old Serena Adams had herpes. Herpes is an incurable disease that lies dormant but is easy to transmit when active at the time of sexual intercourse, even at times when no symptoms are evident. Serena has complained from time to time of itching and sores in her groin and burning sensations while urinating. Although not life threatening, genital herpes can affect one's life by making one more susceptible to HIV infection; newborn babies can be infected if herpes is active in the mother at the time of birth; and one may have to explain the disease's presence to future partners. Serena has been sending notes to Donnie, an 18-year-old

male resident, suggesting dates for sex. That Serena is infected is known only to the staff members and to Serena.

The treatment team, after discussing this development, asked Jackie Lamartine, Serena's social worker, to explore the situation with her. She was instructed to try to convince Serena to avoid any sexual relations with Donnie, or at the least to make sure they have protected sex. Jackie said she didn't mind speaking to Serena but felt someone should inform Donnie of Serena's herpes. Jackie thought that not telling Donnie prevented him from making an informed choice, even to assure his use of a condom. When Jackie spoke to Serena, she told her that she knows she loves Donnie and that she feels Serena would want to protect him and her. Serena refused to cooperate, arguing that the information must be kept confidential, that she and Donnie love each other, and that how they have sex is their own business. She insisted that no one tell Donnie of her illness. The team members are split as to what to do now.

Based on the case above respond to the following questions:

- a) Should Jackie and the team leave Serena and Donnie to make their own decisions despite the risks to them both?
- b) Is the duty to protect Donnie more important than the maintenance of confidentiality for Serena?
- c) If Jackie tells Donnie the facts, she will interfere with Serena's self-determination and freedom, but if she doesn't tell him, she exposes him to potential infection. Is the social worker ethically justified to discuss the situation with Donnie without Serena's agreement?
- d) What is the social worker's duty to protect in this situation and whom should she try to protect? Donnie? Serena? Both?