

**Code of Ethical Practice for Psychiatric Nursing and
Foundations of Psychiatric Nursing Practice**

Japanese Psychiatric Nurses Association

Code of Ethical Practice for Psychiatric Nursing

Psychiatric nurses keep the association's definition of psychiatric nursing to themselves as principles carrying out duties based on the laws and spirit of humanity. Ethical guidelines are defined as follows:

- Psychiatric nurses respect fundamental human rights of the patient by protecting individual rights and dignity.
- Psychiatric nurses strive to obtain the consent of the patient to take part in medical treatment through clear and open communication.
- Psychiatric nurses strive to minimize therapeutic restraints including seclusion.
- Psychiatric nurses are bound to secrecy concerning private matters learned through one's duties.
- Psychiatric nurses participate in continuing education in order to maintain high quality nursing as professionals.
- Psychiatric nurses strive to persistently improve effective nursing practice.
- Psychiatric nurses strive for the patient to live a full and humane life with his or her personality in cooperation with one's family and other professionals.
- Psychiatric nurses strive to meet the reliance and expectation of society with professional expertise and skills.
- Psychiatric nurses strive for the proliferation of mental health welfare based on the expectations of the people in the community.
- Psychiatric nurses make policy proposals as professionals in nursing for the overall improvement of the nursing standard.

1. Foundations of psychiatric nursing practice

1 - 1. Foundations of psychiatric nursing practice

- Fundamental view

<Definition of “Seishinka Kango” (psychiatric nursing)>

In 2004, the Japanese Psychiatric Nurses Association (JPNA) defined “Seishinka Kango” (psychiatric nursing) as follows: Psychiatric nursing is to support a person who needs mental health assistance to live his or her life, as it is, with individual dignity through the recovery of personal autonomy by setting the individual’s dignity and the protection of personal rights as the fundamental principle through application of professional expertise and skills.

This definition does not limit an object to a clinical nursing domain but has broadly set it to “people who need assistance about mental health”. That is, the JPNA uses “Seishinka Kango” as a term pertaining to nearly the same object and domain as “Seishin Kango”, which is a subject name of basic “psychiatric nursing” education. This guideline assumes that psychiatric nursing encompasses a wide range of operational domains.

<Foundations of psychiatric medical care and nursing>

People who need mental health assistance are those who, in many cases, have fallen into a mental crisis or are potentially leading into a crisis. When this happens, a “safe and secure” environment with no threats and minimal anxiety must be provided first. This includes both interpersonal relationships and physical surroundings. Also one needs help preparing the physical conditions to overcome a mental crisis. In this way, the foundation of psychiatric nursing must understand the person from physical, psychological, social, and other points of view. Moreover, the dignity and the rights of the individual must be respected during the course of treatment. Due to the potential of the patient to have either a positive or detrimental effect on one’s self or society, an understanding of the ethics involved is also required.

1. Ensuring safety and security

A safe environment, with the presence of an aid provider, will instill a sense of security in the patient enabling treatment. Since the physical conditions coping with a mental crisis is ready if physiological needs such as “sleep” are fulfilled with “safety and relief”, the crisis will get away. Psychiatric nursing is professional assistance which aims to fulfill safety and relief of people who need assistance regarding the mental health and physiological needs that are the physical foundation for overcoming a crisis. Generally, the assistance is offered based on forming interpersonal relationships between patients and nurses. Moreover, it is implemented with the maintenance of a therapeutic environment, psychiatric pharmacotherapy support, and

psychotherapeutic viewpoint which is understood in all assistance relationships.

The formation of the assistance relationship serves as the foundation for providing assistance. This can only be realized when a confidential relationship exists between patients and nurses. The sense of security by being understood and observed, the power of facing a challenge and struggling for a solution, and mental growth through interpersonal relationships will emerge from a significant patient/nurse relationship. Psychiatric nurses deal with patients who may damage themselves or may threaten another's safety. The maintenance of therapeutic environment must be performed in consideration of the safety and relief of the patient and others concerned. The environment should proactively develop a patient's pride and put the patient at ease.

2. In order to recover autonomy and to gain "a full and humane life with his or her personality"

In relations with pharmacotherapy, nurses provide assistance to patients to compensate biological brittleness and to prepare the physical conditions for avoiding stress. The physical conditions coping with a mental crisis are prepared by psychiatric pharmacotherapy and other treatments, which lead to the foundation for successful rehabilitation of the patient. Psychiatric pharmacotherapy support is an important part of contemporary psychiatric nursing.

Psychiatric nursing aims at "supporting people who need assistance regarding mental health to be able to live a full and humane life with his or her personality". Moreover, it is what society expects of psychiatric nursing. Formerly, patients lived an independent life. However, autonomy is threatened when mental health assistance is needed.

Successful psychiatric nursing is accomplished through the recovery of a patient's independence. The recovery of independence and an enriched self-care capability is the process of gaining a full and civilized life with his or her personality. Assistance for that can be classified under different aspects such as having hopes, self-confidence, pride, independence, responsibility and finding a new role in society. (The concept of recovery)

1 - 2. Psychiatric nursing and legislative system

- Fundamental view

There is an involuntary hospitalization system in psychiatric care, which may be necessary to treat a person without obtaining his or her consent. Moreover, the medical treatment and nursing may be demanded for a person who conducts an act constituting a crime under laws and regulations while in a state of feeble-mindedness or lunacy. Moreover, in many cases mental

diseases are considered chronic disorders and therefore need both medical treatment and as well as social welfare services. Therefore, psychiatric nurses are asked not only for the knowledge of medical treatment and nursing but also for the understanding of welfare and other legal systems.

Psychiatric nursing is developed under legislative systems of mental health medical welfare. In relevant legislative systems, the Act on Mental Health and the Welfare of Persons with Mental Disabilities, the Act for Supporting the Independence of Persons with Disabilities, and the Act on the Medical Services and Observations, etc. of Persons Who Committed Serious Other-Injuring Behavior in the State of Insanity, etc. are especially important. Nurses must understand the fundamental view of these laws, and be well versed about the contents minimally required for their clinical domain. Also, nurses need to understand various systems and collaborate with mental health welfare professionals, social workers, and lawyers if needed.

1 - 3. Ethics of psychiatric nursing practice

- Fundamental view

Psychiatric nursing concerns the realization of a full and civilized life, with his or her personality, for a person who needs assistance about mental health. "With his or her personality" means individual character. A sense of values specific to the person and a way of life should be valued. Self-determination may be difficult for a person who needs assistance with mental health. Relative to the group to which one belongs (family, community, place of work, school), one may choose extremely different morals. There are several reasons for this. For some cases, comprehension (the way of cognition) may be distorted. In other cases, if there is a problem in orientation (a recognition function), one may have an insufficiency of cognitive functions, such as memory, caution, thinking, and execution.

It is difficult to check an intention of the patient with low self-determination capability and there must be minor disputes in supporting the improvement of self-determination. In the case that a patient is unable to make decisions by oneself and the intention of the patient cannot be checked, the assistant may become the one suggesting that "a patient may choose" with respect to his or her past speech and conduct. It can be said that all psychiatric nursing assistance aims at recovery of the self-determination capability of a patient. "Self-identification" necessitates the sense of others and the relationships to them. The assistance "supporting self-determination" must be an aid that an independent choice is made on a social-related basis.

1. Individual dignity and right protection

In psychiatric nursing, the dignity of a person and the protection of a patient's rights must be emphasized. It is because historically psychiatric did not emphasize a patient's human rights. Medical care and nursing was carried out under accommodation principle policies in inferior medical treatment environments. Moreover, in cases of patients with no or low self-determination capability, it is difficult to conduct medical treatment based on the lack of a patient's consent. Nursing practices must return to the essential principles of human rights while monitoring the medical facility for practices detrimental to the patient's rehabilitation. These checks must be carried out by a third party, considering patient perspective and the viewpoint of someone outside the group.

Nurses must attend to medical treatment and nursing without questioning the patient in a way that would be considered unethical. Moreover, constant efforts to polish ethical sensitivity through team discussions are required.

2. Care based on informed consent

The patient needs to understand one's medical treatment and its implementation. Medical workers, including nurses, must strive to present suitable explanations to a patient. Informed consent consists of disclosure and explanation of a medical record, a patient's willing consent, etc. Informed consent includes both the patient's right to decision-making and continuous self-control of mental disorders. The patient's participation in decision-making for medical treatment through informed consent is essential to effective controls of chronic disease for management of the disease and the life of a patient.

The same may be said of "involuntary hospitalization that is not based on the consent of a person". In cases of medical-protective admission and forcible hospitalization, which is administrative disposition by a prefectural governor, etc., it is important to pursue informed consent to encourage a patient to be involved in medical treatment as much as possible.

1 - 4. Development of psychiatric nursing

● Fundamental view

The fields of unfolding psychiatric nursing have diversified. In addition to the care provided in the conventional inpatient facility, there is the care of leaving hospital support and social participation recently tackled within a secured medical treatment fee system. In community based care such as day care and home nursing care, nurses play the central role. Effective psychiatric care cannot be developed in both hospital care and community care without cooperation of multiple occupational fields. It is because diversified expertise and skills are

required in order to help patients of various conditions. Nurses must function as the pivot of the medical team.

1. Care in inpatient facility

An index which gauges favorable recovery is essential for offering care in alignment with a specific recovery process. In order to discern a recovery process, the observation of nonspecific conditions is important. These conditions appear in all disorders and include sleep, appetite, excretion, fatigue, other feelings, etc. These serve as a restorative useful index. In the case that satisfied recovery is not as expected, the limiting factor of the recovery should be sought.

Moreover, it is important to suppose one's life after leaving the hospital. Care that harnessed the advantage of hospitalization should be developed, with an awareness of the issue of what must be prepared for the life after hospital discharge. Psychiatric nursing has the role of improving medical treatment surroundings while considering medical safety.

2. Care of leaving hospital support and social participation

In order to avoid producing a new social long-term inpatient, it is essential to begin management for a patient's release and returning the local community from the early stages of hospitalization. In difficult cases, a local shift plan should be elaborated at the care meeting in which the patient and local authorities participate, where coordinated actions among concerned individuals are essential. The assessment of supporting long-term inpatient's discharge should be made with an optimistic attitude. In the psychiatric unit, only one side of the patient, who has adapted himself to a ward, is in sight. Belief in the possibility of an inpatient is essential. Psychiatric nursing should aim at coping with each predictable problem, during the transition to a local life, by collaborating with the patient and growing together with other inpatients.

3. Community care

Inpatient care is only temporary medical treatment in order to support a patient's life in the local community. Assuming the inpatient will return to life within the community, during hospitalization predictions must be made regarding the patient's life after leaving the hospital. Psychiatric nursing precipitates the patient's hope and way of life even with one's mental disorder by providing care aligned with it.

The goal of a psychiatric nursing care is to regenerate a person's abilities and develop a right and fulfilling life by oneself with the opportunity of living in the community. In a local life, many people, including one's family, a visit nurse, a home helper, a support counselor of a local activity

support center, and a welfare commissioner, are concerned. In this multi-occupational team, nurses are expected to have a role of a provider of psychiatric care and nursing service.