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978-0-521-17769-6 - Ethics and Law: For Australian Nurses

Kim Atkins, Bonnie Britton and Sheryl De Lacey

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ETHICS & LAW

FOR AUSTRALIAN NURSES

The nursing profession encompasses a huge diversity of practices and practice settings, but the aim of nursing practice remains the same: to support and promote the health and wellbeing of people across the life span. Nurses undertake a wide variety of professional roles – from direct clinical care to administration, policy development and service planning, to research and teaching – with ethical and legal considerations at the core of every aspect. *Ethics and Law for Australian Nurses* is an integrated and coherent textbook that allows student nurses to understand and appreciate the relationship between the legal and ethical frameworks of nursing practice and their origins in people's social nature.

The text considers two key concepts in understanding the relation of ethics and law to the practice of nursing: the idea of human vulnerability (and its basis in the social dimension of human nature), and respect for persons. It argues that concern for one's own and others' vulnerability is central to the universality and moral legitimacy of the law in a liberal democracy such as Australia. Showing respect for the law is not simply obedience to it, but rather, an expression of our respect for human vulnerability.

Ethics and Law for Australian Nurses provides a fresh understanding of the ethical and legal aspects of committing and witnessing errors in nursing practice, and argues that admitting and redressing nursing errors promptly is of enormous practical and ethical value to individual nurses, patients and health care institutions.

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