

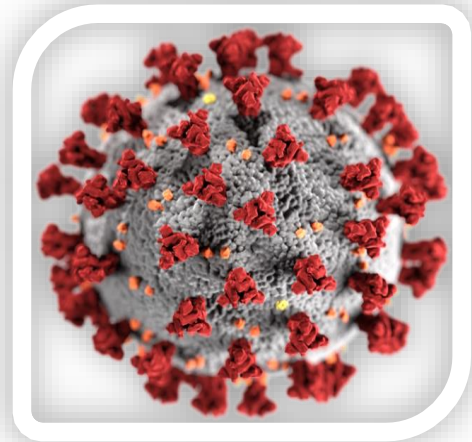
“Ethical Dilemmas in the Workplace during COVID-19”

Occupational Health Nursing Perspective

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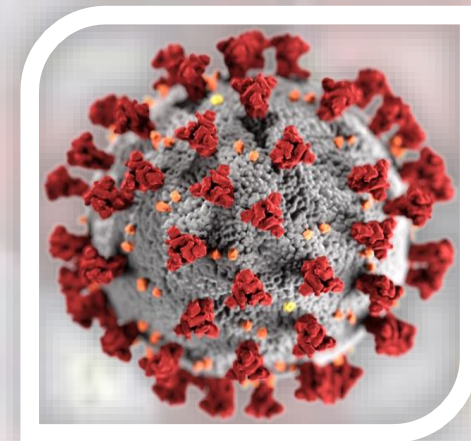
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INTRODUCTION



Food Packaging Industry = Food Supply Chain

Food availability vs People protection



Ethical Dilemmas - Definition.

- “Situations in which an agent stands under two conflicting requirements none of which overrides the other”.
- “Situations that cannot be solved; decisions made between two options may be morally plausible but are equally problematic due to the circumstances”.

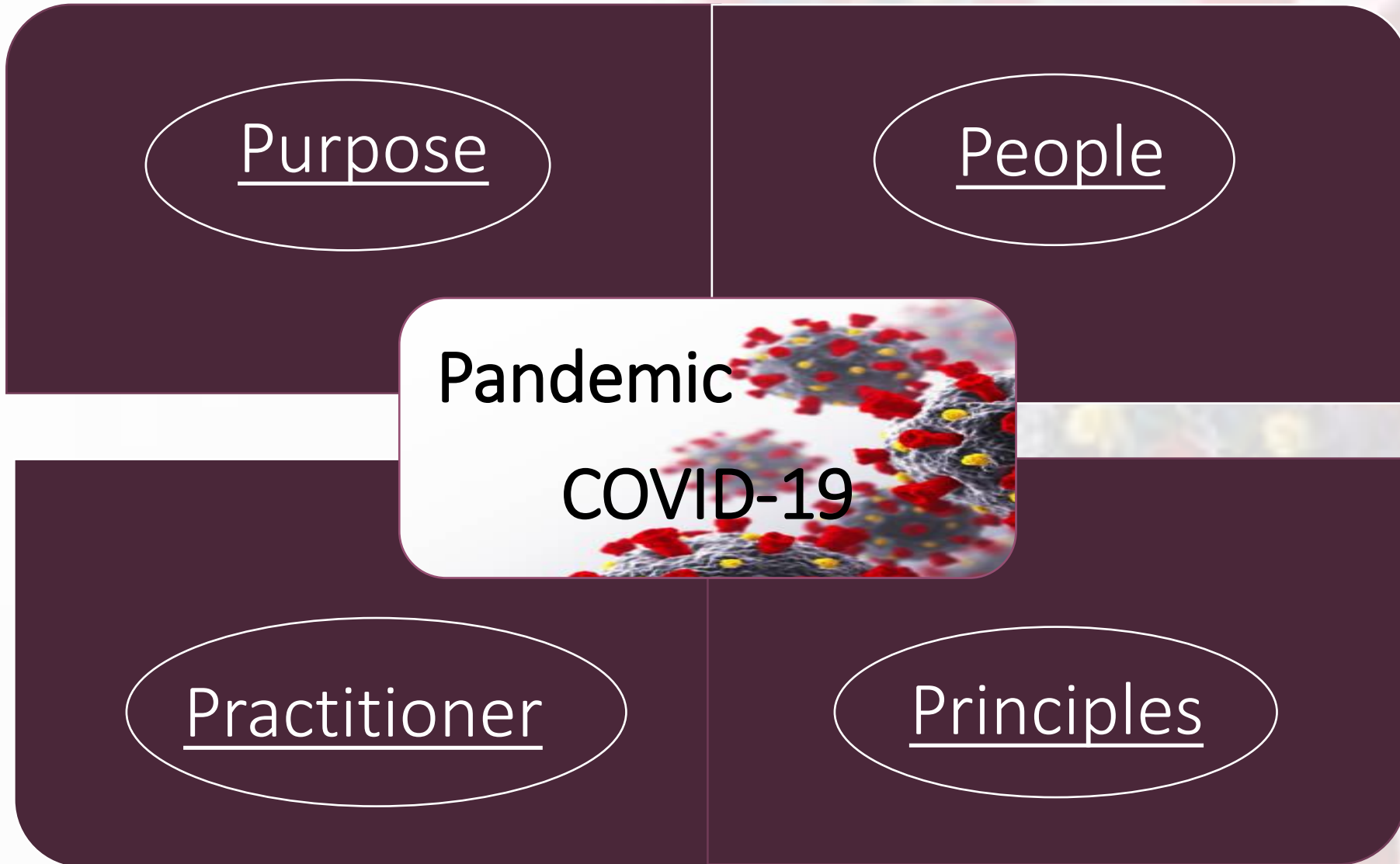
In an Occupational Health Nursing Setting :

- A situation where an OH practitioner must make a choice between competing values and knowing that no matter what choice they make ,there will be consequences.
- WHO Working group on Ethics and COVID -19
 - Anticipated ethical dilemmas during the pandemic.



COVID-19

Ethical Dilemmas in OH Nursing Perspective



PURPOSE – Ethical Dilemmas

- Organisations that are part of the food supply chain ⇒ Essential Industries.
 - Commitment to purpose in conflict with employee well-being and safety.
 - Perception of prioritising production over employee well-being and safety.
 - Predominantly white-collar workers working from home.
 - Balancing isolation and quarantine with production demands/customer demands.
 - Risking business reputation should things go wrong e.g. Cluster outbreaks, deaths.

COVID-19 knowledge and expertise

Robust safety measures

Continual awareness training for all stakeholders

Additional support resources for essential & vulnerable employees

Accurate & timely Communication

PEOPLE – Ethical Dilemmas

- Commitment to purpose vs personal well-being and safety.
- Expert ,vulnerable essential workers working onsite.
- Employees not adhering to COVID-19 precaution outside work.
- Non- disclosure of exposure due to fear of isolating,.
- Non- disclosure of exposure due to COVID-19 stigma.
- Vaccination issues – refusal ,voluntary vs mandatory.

COVID-19 awareness - allay fears

Peer coaching and Support

Strict use of protective equipment

Mental well-being support - EAP

Vaccination explained and made accessible

Additional support and appreciation

A specialist employee, over 60 years old, with chronic health conditions, deemed to be an essential worker, is compelled to work in the factory during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employers prioritizing production despite the potential risk of employees' exposure to SARS-COV-2 through close contact at work during the COVID-19 pandemic.



PRINCIPLES – Ethical Dilemmas

- **Autonomy** – free and able to make choices.
- **Accountability** – OHNP responsible for own choice ,act within scope of practice.
- **Beneficence** – best balance between benefits and risk.
- **Non- Maleficence** – Prevent harm. Do no harm.
- **Justice** – fact based /risk-based decisions.
- **Fidelity** – honesty and loyalty.
- **Veracity** - complete openness and honest even when the truth may be unpleasant



PRACTITIONER – Ethical Dilemmas

- Conflict between company / employee interests and OHNPs personal safety.
- Learning on-the-go - Sudden expert on COVID – 19.
- Expectation to be accessible 24/7.
- Essential work and potential exposure of family.
- Employee confidentiality and employer requirement for disclosure.

COVID-19 knowledge and expertise

Learning on-the go

Collaboration

Resilience

Self – Care & Self –worth

Embrace digital transformation (4th IR)



Acknowledgement

NIOH, NHLS, NEDLAC

ICN, SANC - Code of Ethics

World Health Organisation



THANK YOU