

ETHICS CARD DURING THE PANDEMIC  
SUPPORT FOR GOOD NURSING CARE

We, the Swedish Society of Nursing Ethical Advice, want this card to give you hope in difficult situations, the courage to cope and the confidence that what you do makes a difference. We hope it helps you feel proud that what you are doing right now is the best option for your patients, their families and loved ones.

The International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics for Nurses includes four elements. During the pandemic these could relate to:

**Health promotion.** Try to work with health promotion: what this means for individual patients can vary, depending on their condition.

**Prevent diseases.** Follow hygiene guidelines and use protective equipment properly.

**Restore health.** For most of the people you care for, the goal is to recover, and you can provide valuable care to achieve this. When there is no cure, it is important to contribute to a dignified death.

**Reduce suffering.** Enhance social relationships with patients and their relatives in every way possible. By your presence and knowledge, you can relieve patients' anxiety and worries.

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SUPPORT FOR NURSES

To conduct nursing based on the nurse's code of ethics during pandemic times requires that, in addition to caring for patients and supporting their relatives, you must take care of yourself and your colleagues.

Support during this time could include:

**Collegial support.** Seek support from colleagues: you are all in the same situation. Support each other, you are all doing your best given the difficult ongoing circumstances.

**Reflection.** Despite a high workload, a few minutes of reflection can be valuable. Use some concrete questions, such as: What did we do well today? What has been particularly challenging? Is there anything we could have done differently?

**Prioritize.** These exceptional situations can create ethical stress if you are forced to prioritize nursing actions or skip some nursing tasks that are necessary for the patients' care. In these cases, talk to your manager.

**Recovery.** Make sure you take a few minutes break during your working day when you do not need to concentrate on nursing tasks. In your spare time do things that give you joy and replenish your resources. Getting enough rest will help you to cope with work.



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