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Abstract

The paper argues in favor of bioethics as an alternative to traditional medical ethics. Relations between the patient and the doctor placed in the bioethical context are considered as a part of more general, global issues: relations between clients, customers, various (including non-medical) services and the professional medical community and society in general, world-renowned scientists and the international community. Medical ethics is seen in the wider expanse of diverse economic, political and cultural relations not only in terms of responsibilities but also natural rights which all people have without exception and with regard to professional identity. In contrast to traditional medical ethics, bioethics not only encourages one to reconsider the content of human morality, which is built on interpersonal relations, but also shows that disease and health are not merely medical phenomena. In this situation, paramount importance is assigned to interests of the client and society rather than medical corporations. Such a transformation of medical theory and practice requires public discussion of professional ethics issues and external regulation control. There is a need to develop ethical criteria for medical activity not only at the national but also international, or even global, levels, as well as criteria for long-term effects of highly technological professional medical practice. Bioethics expands the boundaries of professional medical ethics and ethical reflection of its normative foundations as it carries out both internal (code of ethics) and external (ethics committees and commission) "regulation" of professional practice. The purpose of bioethics is the preservation and development of life represented not only by man but also other creatures, which has never been on the agenda of medical ethics.

Keywords: bioethics, medical ethics, moral autonomy, preservation and development of life

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