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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to present and reflect on some of the current theories of human dignity and autonomy. The understanding of autonomy in the 4 principles theory of Beauchamp and Childress will be the starting point of this paper as it presents medical ethics and health care ethics as patient-orientated model with special attention paid to the needs and rights of the patient. According to this orientation of health care ethics, the concept of human dignity plays an important role, too. The understanding of this concept in ethics of social consequences will be analyzed. In the final part of the paper, the implication of these principles to the codes of conduct of health care professionals will be presented.

Keywords: respect for autonomy, dignity, medical decision making process, health care ethics, ethics of social consequences

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