



## Emergency First Responder

Medico-Legal Issues



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## Objectives

*By the end of this session you should be able to:*

- Outline the ethical and legal framework in relation to patient pre-hospital care



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## Duty of Care

- While on duty you are required to provide appropriate care to a patient
- You must continue with the care offered
- Care provided must not be substandard or exceed your training level
- You cannot hand over the care of the patient to someone less qualified if they require your standard of training for care



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## Standard of Care

- The level of care expected of providers, taking into account their training and experience and condition under which the care is rendered



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## Legal and Ethical Issues

- Negligence
  - Standard of care
  - Improper care
  - Duty to act



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## Legal Issues

- In a court of law, your actions would be compared to that of an equally trained person performing under the same conditions



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## Legal and Ethical Issues

- Consent
  - Expressed
  - Implied
- Refusal of care
  - Assault
  - Must explain the risks



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## Patient Confidentiality

- Any information obtained about a patient's history, condition, or treatment is considered confidential
- This information should not be disclosed other than to those involved in the provision of care to the patient



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## Patient Confidentiality

- It is appropriate to discuss the history, condition and care given to a patient at a debriefing session, but not necessary to identify a patient by name
- However you may be required to disclose certain information in a court of law



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## Crime Scene

- Any location where a crime has been committed,
- or
- where evidence relating to a crime may be found



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## Crime Scene

- Do not enter any situation which may endanger you or others whom you are responsible for
- Regardless of the condition of any patient at an emergency scene, your first priority is your safety and the safety of those you are responsible for!



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## Preservation of a crime scene

- Once the scene is safe, provision of patient care is the priority
- Do not disturb scene if possible
- Record the position of patient and any objects you may move in order to provide care



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## Preservation of a crime scene

- Do not move about the scene unnecessarily
- Backtrack on your entrance route when exiting the scene
- If you have any reason to consider the scene unsafe, do not enter until Gardai state it is safe to do so



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## Summary

- Standard of Care
- Consent - Expressed & Implied
- Negligence
- Duty of care
- Patient confidentiality
- Crime scene & the preservation of a suspected crime scene



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