

# Optum



## Relias Spotlight Series

May 2024

This month we are focusing on Ethics. *Primum non nocere*: Above all, do no harm!

**Why It Matters:** Ethical principles are especially essential to the conduct of professionals in behavioral health. Considering the various complexities involved in behavioral health treatment, ethics plays a crucial role in ensuring the delivery of effective, compassionate and safe care to individuals dealing with behavioral health challenges as well as safeguarding the integrity of providers.

Respect for individuals may perhaps be the most fundamental principle in all of ethics. Respect calls each and every one of us to recognize the intrinsic dignity of all other people. If something is intrinsic to us, it is essential to our being and cannot be earned.

Here are some key reasons why ethics are vital in behavioral health:

Member Welfare and Safety: Behavioral health professionals are entrusted with vulnerable individuals seeking help. Ethical guidelines ensure interventions are geared towards promoting the member's best interests and avoiding harm.

Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity: Ethical standards include cultural competence, sensitivity and an understanding of how cultural factors can impact mental health and treatment.

Maintaining Trust and Confidentiality: Confidentiality is a cornerstone of ethical practice in behavioral health. Members must feel secure in sharing personal and sensitive information with their providers.

Respecting Autonomy and Dignity: Professionals should involve members in treatment decisions, respecting their values, beliefs and right to self-determination.

Professional Boundaries and Relationships: Ethical guidelines ensure that interactions remain therapeutic and avoid any potential for exploitation or harm.

Accountability and Integrity: Ethical practice includes honesty, transparency and acknowledgment of limitations in competence or expertise.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance: Adhering to ethical standards helps professionals comply with legal and regulatory requirements governing their field of behavioral health. This protects both members and behavioral health providers.

Behavioral health treatment often presents complex ethical dilemmas. Having a strong ethical foundation equips professionals with the tools to navigate these challenges and make informed, ethical decisions.

**What Now:** There are effective and impactful trainings in Relias that go in-depth into evaluating and explaining ethics on various behavioral health topics.

We encourage you to log into [Relias](#) and explore the following modules:

Class	Course	CEU
Ethical Social Work Practice	REL-ACU-0-ESWP	2
Strategies for Navigating the Ethics of Dual Relationships	REL-BHC-0-SNEDRT	1.75

Navigating Ethical Challenges: Counselors	REL-BHC-0-NECC	2
The Basics of Ethical Decision Making	REL-ALL-0-BETHDM	0.5
In Session: Ethical Decision-Making	REL-BHC-0-ISEDMD	1
Legal and Ethical Standards For Behavioral Health Professionals	REL-BHC-0-LESBHP	1

We appreciate the work you do each day with our members. Thank you for providing access to behavioral health services to Idahoans!

Sincerely,  
The Optum Education and Training Team