5.1: Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Explore the nurse’s role and legal and ethical responsibilities when providing care to clients with mental health disorders
- Describe standards of care for nurses
- Discuss the elements of a malpractice lawsuit
- Explain patient rights based on the Patient Self-Determination Act

The *Code of Ethics for Nurses With Interpretive Statements* states, “The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.”[^1] This chapter describes nurses’ legal and ethical responsibilities while protecting the safety and rights of clients receiving mental health care.