

Physicians and Sanctity of Life: Emerging Ethical Issues*

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KEYWORDS Ethics. Physicians. Nigerian Police Act. Human Life

ABSTRACT This paper is about doctors reneging on the oath of their profession to save lives because of other secondary reasons that are antithetical to the ethics of their profession. In this paper, I intend to bring up some ethical issues arising from common occurrence in some developing countries especially in Nigeria where the sanctity of life is sacrificed on the altar of selfish demand for monetary deposits before major operations are carried out on sick patients and also the blind demand for police report as contained in Nigerian Police Act before a patient with a gunshot injuries could be treated in hospitals. To this end, I wish to argue, in this paper, that human life, under no circumstance, should not be sacrificed for monetary consideration and immoral law such as Nigerian Police Act, and that it is morally wrong for physicians who are trained to save life to abandon their oath of office in deference to unjust law. While I will establish the major causes of gunshot injuries as opposed to the presuppositions of the Police Act, I will also advocate a deletion of certain provision of the Police Act as a way of making it conforming to international human rights standards.