

BIOETHICS & HUMANITIES NEWSLETTER



WELCOME...

Welcome to the monthly Bioethics and Humanities Newsletter provided by the Program in Bioethics and Humanities at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine.

Program in Bioethics and Humanities: *Our Mission*

We are committed to helping healthcare professionals explore and understand the increasingly complex ethical questions that have been brought on by advances in medical technology and the health care system. We achieve this through education, research, and service within the Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa Health Care, University of Iowa, and the wider Iowa community.

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The Program](#)

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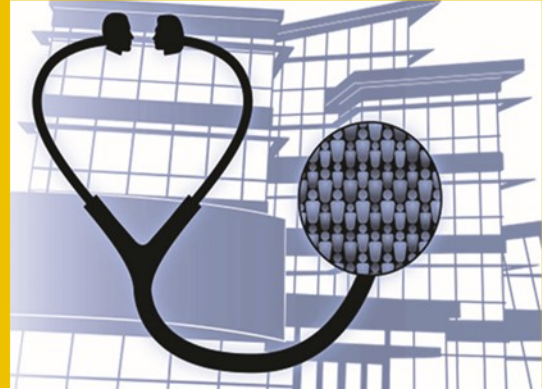
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ETHICS IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

Friday, May 31, 2024 | 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



SESSION ONE:

Four Components of a Moral Event: A Primer on Normative Ethics

Speaker: Aaron Kunz, DO, MA, MME



SESSION TWO:

Real-world Ethics for Artificial Intelligence in Health Care

Speaker: Matthew DeCamp, MD, PhD



SESSION THREE:

My Injured Adolescent Patient Has a Positive Toxicology Screen—What Should I Do about That? Balancing Health, Privacy, and the Public Good

Speaker: Graeme Pitcher, MBBCh



SESSION FOUR:

Moral Resilience of Healthcare Professionals

Speaker: Lisa Anderson-Shaw, DrPh, MA, MSN (APRN-C, HEC-C)

Please see the attached brochure and [our website](#) for full details and information about continuing education accreditation.

Intended Audience: Administrators, Advanced Practice Providers, Attorneys, Chaplains, Nurses, Physicians, Social Workers, Students, Trainees, and Others

Registration Fee: \$100 (includes continuing education credits)

PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHT

Ethical and Professional Issues Encountered by Fourth-Year Medical Students during a Critical Care Clerkship before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Rachel A. Hadler, Laura A. Shinkunas, Lauris C. Kaldjian, Erica M. Carlisle
[Southern Medical Journal](#)

Objectives: The objective of this study was to describe ethical and professional issues encountered and the ethical and professional values cited by medical students during their critical care clerkship, with a comparison of issues encountered before and during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Methods: In this single-center, retrospective mixed-methods study, two investigators at a midwestern US academic medical center performed qualitative content analysis on reflections written by fourth-year medical students about ethical and professional issues encountered during their critical care rotations between March 2016 and September 2021. We also analyzed the ethical/professional values mentioned in their reflections. Descriptive and inferential (χ^2) statistics were performed to examine differences in issues and values cited before and during the pandemic.

Results: Respondents highlighted several key themes identified in prior studies, including decision making (64.1%), communication between clinicians and families (52.2%), and justice-related issues (32.1%), as well as interdisciplinary communication (25.7%) and issues related to the role of students in the intensive care unit (6.1%). Six novel subthemes were identified in this group, predominantly related to resource availability and end-of-life care. Of 343 reflections, 69% were written before the pandemic. Analysis of ethical and professional issues before and during COVID were notable for several significant differences, including increased discussion of inadequate tools/supplies/equipment (1.3% before vs 17.6% during, $P = 0.005$) and/or access to care (3.9% before vs 17.6% during, $P = 0.03$) and increased concerns about the tension between law and ethics (21.2% before vs 41.2% during, $P = 0.028$). Primacy of patient welfare (49.8% before vs 47.2% during, $P = 0.659$) and patient autonomy (51.1% before vs 38.9% during, $P = 0.036$) were the most commonly cited ethical principles in both time frames, often discussed concurrently and in tension.

Conclusions: Although the COVID-19 pandemic was associated with increased reflection by medical students about resources in the intensive care unit, their perception of ethical issues arising in critical illness remained largely focused on enduring challenges in shared decision-making. These findings should be considered when developing ethics curricula for critical care rotations.



BIOETHICS TOPIC OF THE MONTH:

MIRACLE LANGUAGE IN THE CLINICAL SETTING

Key Articles and Resources

- ⇒ Bibler TM, Shinall MC, Jr., Stahl D. Responding to those who hope for a miracle: Practices for clinical bioethicists. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2018; 18: 40-51.
- ⇒ Blackler L. Hope for a miracle. [Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing](#). 2017; 19: 115-119.
- ⇒ Byrne-Martelli S, Rosenberg LB. [Fast Fact #433](#): Communication strategies when patients utilize spiritual language to hope for a miracle. Palliative Care Network of Wisconsin, 2021.
- ⇒ Cooper RS, Ferguson A, Bodurtha JN, et al. AMEN in challenging conversations: Bridging the gaps between faith, hope, and medicine. [J Oncol Pract](#). 2014; 10: e191-195.
- ⇒ de Freitas MH, Leal MM, Nwora EI. Praying for a miracle part II: Idiosyncrasies of spirituality and its relations with religious expressions in health. [Front Psychol](#). 2022; 13: 893780.
- ⇒ DeLisser HM. A practical approach to the family that expects a miracle. [Chest](#). 2009; 135: 1643-1647.
- ⇒ DePergola PA. The morality of medical miracles: Ethical reflections on pediatric oncology. [Journal of Health Ethics](#). 2019; 15: 9.
- ⇒ Dunlop BC. Demystifying African American spirituality: Exploring the measurement of spirituality in the context of medical decision-making. [Illness, Crisis & Loss](#). 2024; 0(0).
- ⇒ Leal MM, Nwora EI, de Melo GF, et al. Praying for a miracle: Negative or positive impacts on health care? [Front Psychol](#). 2022; 13: 840851.
- ⇒ Phelps AC, Maciejewski PK, Nilsson M, et al. Religious coping and use of intensive life-prolonging care near death in patients with advanced cancer. [JAMA](#). 2009; 301: 1140-1147.
- ⇒ Shinall MC, Jr., Ehrenfeld JM, Guillamondegui OD. Religiously affiliated intensive care unit patients receive more aggressive end-of-life care. [J Surg Res](#). 2014; 190: 623-627.
- ⇒ Shinall MC, Jr., Stahl D, Bibler TM. Addressing a patient's hope for a miracle. [J Pain Symptom Manage](#). 2018; 55: 535-539.
- ⇒ Sulmasy DP. What is a miracle? [South Med J](#). 2007; 100: 1223-1228.
- ⇒ Widera EW, Rosenfeld KE, Fromme EK, et al. Approaching patients and family members who hope for a miracle. [J Pain Symptom Manage](#). 2011; 42: 119-125.



HUMANITIES CORNER

This month's spotlight is on **Simran Singh, a fourth year visiting medical student**. Her creative work is a poem and a reflection. She completed this creative work as part of the *Ethics and Humanities Sub-Internship Seminar*. During this Seminar students are asked to complete a written reflection or creative work that responds to a situation they encountered during their sub-internship that illustrated values in ethics, professionalism, or humanism.

They once yearned for the joy a child could bestow

*They once yearned for the joy a child could bestow,
Financial debts and hormone injections they painfully bear,
Thoughts of uncertainty in constant overflow.*

*They wait anxiously, hoping embryos will grow,
The embryo transfer begins the next exhausting affair,
They once yearned for the joy a child could bestow.*

*Months pass by, but the apprehension does not plateau,
Finally, the long awaited cry of a newborn fills the air,
Thoughts of uncertainty in constant overflow.*

*Over the years, they delay their decision to tomorrow,
Their ironic dilemma, they have embryos to spare,
They once yearned for the joy a child could bestow.*

HUMANITIES CORNER (CONTINUED)

*Knowing a biological child could come from each embryo,
Of all their possible options, they were aware,
Thoughts of uncertainty in constant overflow.*

*Donating or thawing, both options full of woe,
Complex choices, impossible to compare.
They once yearned for the joy a child could bestow.
Thoughts of uncertainty in constant overflow.*

This Villanelle-style poem tells the story of a couple with infertility. A frustrating and burdensome diagnosis, couples face significant emotional distress and financial burden throughout its treatment. The stress is never-ending, playing a prominent role with each IVF cycle, pregnancy, and even afterwards. The couple in this poem has undergone IVF and has frozen embryos stored; after they have completed their family, they struggle to decide the disposition of leftover embryos.

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Ayik KA. Losing our way in a rare disease diagnostic odyssey. [Health Aff \(Millwood\)](#). 2024; 43: 452-455.
- ⇒ Boylan HC, Goff AD. Dual advocates in deceased organ donation: The potential for moral distress in organ procurement organization staff. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2024; 35: 70-75.
- ⇒ Corn BW, Feldman DB. The ethics of hope—a moral imperative for oncologists. [JAMA Oncol](#). 2024 Mar 21. [Epub ahead of print].

“Instead of bludgeoning patients until an improbable hope is surrendered, it is possible to honestly communicate medical information while allowing patients to retain differing goals and hopes even if they seem incongruous.”

(Corn and Feldman)

- ⇒ Elgudin J, Johnsen C, Westermair AL, et al. Palliative psychiatry for a patient with treatment-refractory schizophrenia and severe chronic malignant catatonia: Case report. [Ann Palliat Med](#). 2024 Mar 19. [Epub ahead of print].
- ⇒ Fins JJ, Merner AR, Wright MS, et al. Identity theft, deep brain stimulation, and the primacy of post-trial obligations. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2024; 54: 34-41.
- ⇒ Gross J, Koffman J. Examining how goals of care communication are conducted between doctors and patients with severe acute illness in hospital settings: A realist systematic review. [PLoS One](#). 2024; 19: e0299933.
- ⇒ Halpin SN, Alain G, Seaman A, et al. Comorbid dementia and cancer therapy decision-making: A scoping review. [J Appl Gerontol](#). 2024 Feb 12. [Epub ahead of print].
- ⇒ Heirman AN, Arends CR, de Jel DVC, et al. Decisional conflict and decision regret in head and neck oncology: A systematic review and meta-analysis. [JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg](#). 2024 Mar 21. [Epub ahead of print].
- ⇒ Kaebnick GE, Magnus DC, Kao A, et al. Editors' statement on the responsible use of generative AI technologies in scholarly journal publishing. [Ethics Hum Res](#). 2023; 45: 39-43.
- ⇒ Li L, Barnes DE, Nouri S, et al. Surrogate decision-makers from historically marginalized populations have lower levels of preparedness for care planning. [J Am Geriatr Soc](#). 2024; 72: 559-566.
- ⇒ McIntosh JT, Shattell M. How should suicide prevention and healing be expressed as goals of inpatient psychiatric unit design? [AMA J Ethics](#). 2024; 26: E199-204.

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Neitzke-Spruill L, Devenot N, Sisti D, et al. Bio-psycho-spiritual perspectives on psychedelics: Clinical and ethical implications. [Perspect Biol Med](#). 2024; 67: 117-142.
- ⇒ Oladayo AM, Odukoya O, Sule V, et al. Perceptions and beliefs of community gatekeepers about genomic risk information in African cleft research. [BMC Public Health](#). 2024; 24: 507.
- ⇒ Olszewski AE, Zhou C, Ugale J, et al. Frequency of perceived conflict between families and clinicians at time of clinical ethics consultation in hospitalized children. [AJOB Empir Bioeth](#). 2024; 15: 60-65.
- ⇒ Parsa-Parsi RW, Gillon R, Wiesing U. The revised International Code of Medical Ethics unites doctors under one global medical ethos. [BMJ](#). 2024; 384: q449.
- ⇒ Parsa-Parsi RW, Gillon R, Wiesing U. The revised International Code of Medical Ethics: Responses to some important questions. [J Med Ethics](#). 2024; 50: 179-180.
- ⇒ Sajber K, Khaleefah S. Culturally competent respect for the autonomy of Muslim patients: Fostering patient agency by respecting justice. [Theor Med Bioeth](#). 2024; 45: 133-149.
- ⇒ Sulmasy DP. Physicians, spirituality, and compassionate patient care. [N Engl J Med](#). 2024; 390: 1061-1063.
- ⇒ Turner K, Lahey T, Gremmels B, et al. Organizational ethics in healthcare: A national survey. [HEC Forum](#). 2024 Jan 17. [Epub ahead of print].
- ⇒ Waltz A, Johnson B, Schwartz PH. Returning clinically relevant research results to participants: Guidelines for investigators and the IRB. [Ethics Hum Res](#). 2024; 46: 22-29.



BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ SCOTUS' abortion pill mifepristone case is really about the FDA. [STAT News](#), March 25, 2024.
- ⇒ The allure and dangers of experimenting with brain-dead bodies. [Undark](#), March 25, 2024.
- ⇒ First human transplant of a genetically modified pig kidney performed. [NPR](#), March 21, 2024.
- ⇒ New York trusted this company to care for the sick and elderly. Instead, it left people confused and alone. [ProPublica](#), March 12, 2024.
- ⇒ Should people suffering from mental illness be eligible for medically assisted death? Canada plans to legalize that in 2027—a philosopher explains the core questions. [The Conversation](#), March 11, 2024.
- ⇒ What is a frozen embryo worth? Alabama's IVF case reflects bigger questions over grieving and wrongful death laws. [The Conversation](#), March 7, 2024.
- ⇒ Too many donor organs go to waste. Here's how to get them into the patients who need them. [STAT News](#), March 2, 2024.
- ⇒ New federal guidance is hurting cancer patients, especially those in rural areas. [STAT News](#), March 1, 2024.
- ⇒ Southern anti-trans laws are uprooting families—and leaving them with impossible choices. [Rolling Stone](#), March 1, 2024.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING

- ⇒ The Hastings Center: [Upcoming Webinars and Events](#)
- ⇒ Michigan State University: [2022-2023 Bioethics Public Seminar Series](#)

ONGOING

- ⇒ The Hastings Center: [Recent Webinars and Events](#)
- ⇒ American Journal of Bioethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous webinars
- ⇒ The MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous lectures
- ⇒ Children's Mercy Kansas City: [Pediatric Ethics Podcast series](#) and [Webinars and Workshops](#)
- ⇒ Office for Human Research Protections [Luminaries Lecture Series](#)

BIOETHICS SERVICES AT THE UIHC

ETHICS CONSULT SERVICE

This service is a clinical resource for UI Health Care personnel who would like help addressing an ethical question or problem related to a patient's care. Consults can be ordered through EPIC or by paging the ethics consultant on call. For more information, [click here](#).



CLINICAL RESEARCH ETHICS SERVICE

We provide free consultation on ethical issues related to research design, tissue banking, genetic research results, informed consent, and working with vulnerable patient populations. In particular, we assist clinical investigators in identifying and addressing the ethical challenges that frequently arise when designing or conducting research with human subjects. These include ethical challenges in sampling design; randomized and placebo-controlled studies; participant recruitment and informed consent; return of individual-level research results; community engagement processes; and more. For more information, [click here](#).