

BIOETHICS & HUMANITIES NEWSLETTER



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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.

[More Details About The Program](#)

BIOETHICS RESOURCES

COVID-19 ETHICS RESOURCES

- ⇒ [2020 Survey of America's Physicians: Covid-19 Impact Edition](#)—NEW!
- ⇒ The AMA Journal of Ethics: [Covid-19 Ethics Resource Center](#)
- ⇒ Bioethics.net and the American Journal of Bioethics: [Bioethics Toolkit Resources for COVID-19](#)
- ⇒ Children's Mercy Kansas City: [COVID Pandemic Podcast Series](#)—
- ⇒ The Hastings Center: [Ethics Resources on the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- ⇒ The [Hasting Center Report May/June 2020 Issue](#) (dedicated to COVID-19)
- ⇒ Health Affairs: [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus Disease\) Resource Center](#)
- ⇒ Johns Hopkins University : [Coronavirus Ethics and Policy Insights and Resources](#)
- ⇒ John's Hopkins University: [An ethical framework for the COVID-19 reopening process](#)
- ⇒ Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security: [What US Hospitals Should Do Now to Prepare for a COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- ⇒ UIHC Ethics Rounds (6/17/20): [Life, liberty, and COVID-19: An ethical examination of social distancing](#)
- ⇒ UNC Center for Bioethics: [Pandemic Ethics Resources](#)



RESOURCES ON CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND TRIAGE DECISION MAKING

- ⇒ ASPR TRACIE Topic Collection: [Crisis Standards of Care](#)
- ⇒ Institute of Medicine (2012): [Crisis Standards of Care: A Systems Framework for Catastrophic Disaster Response](#)
- ⇒ Minnesota Department of Health (2019): [Patient Care Strategies for Scarce Resource Situations](#)
- ⇒ Minnesota Department of Health (2020): [Minnesota Crisis Standards of Care Framework](#)
- ⇒ New York State Task Force on Life and the Law, New York State Department of Health (2015): [Ventilator Allocation Guidelines](#)
- ⇒ The Pandemic Influenza Ethics Initiative Work Group of the Veteran's Health Administration's National Center for Ethics in Health Care (2010): [Meeting the Challenge of Pandemic Influenza: Ethical Guidance for Leaders and Health Care Professionals in the Veterans Health Administration](#)

BIOETHICS EDUCATIONAL TOPIC OF THE MONTH:

RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO EXISTENTIAL SUFFERING/ DISTRESS IN THE CLINICAL SETTING

Take Home Points

- ⇒ Existential suffering/distress has been defined as “an affliction of the person, not the body.” According to a bio-psych-social-spiritual model, existential suffering/distress disrupts our physical, emotional, relational, and meaningful selves.
- ⇒ One goal of a narrative ethics approach is to bridge the distance (liminal space) between the health professional’s understanding and the patient’s lived experience. Narrative ethics implies a need for openness to being changed by the story (experience) of another human being.
- ⇒ A health professional can recognize/acknowledge existential suffering/distress by asking the patient these types of questions:
 - ◇ Are you suffering? (you may need to explain what you mean)
 - ◇ Is there anything bothering you other than physical pain/discomfort?
 - ◇ What do you fear?
 - ◇ What is the worst thing about all of this for you?
 - ◇ What do you hope for?
- ⇒ It is key to follow the person’s lead, respect boundaries, privacy, confidentiality. This shows respect for persons.
- ⇒ Psychedelic pharmacotherapy appears promising in reducing existential distress in patients with cancer. The psychedelic, psilocybin, is moving into Phase III trials for depression.



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- ⇒ Caplan AL. The ethics of the unmentionable. [J Med Ethics](#). 2020 Oct; 46: 687-688.

“Critics, including myself, have long alleged that the only possible source of organs for both Chinese citizens and transplant tourists are executed prisoners. Many accounts, commissions and investigations have confirmed an immoral reliance on this vulnerable population.”

(Caplan)

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BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ [Among people of color asked to join Covid-19 vaccine trials, worries about inequities run deep.](#) STAT News, September 28, 2020.
- ⇒ [Does Covid-19 spell the death of autonomy?](#) Bioedge, September 27, 2020.
- ⇒ [Coronavirus: Why I support the world's first COVID vaccine challenge trial.](#) The Conversation, September 24, 2020.
- ⇒ [More migrant women say they didn't OK surgery in detention.](#) Associated Press, September 18, 2020.
- ⇒ [Ethical considerations in the use of AI mortality predictions in the care of people with serious illness.](#) Health Affairs Blog, September 16, 2020.
- ⇒ [Ethical or exploitative—should prisoners participate in Covid-19 vaccine trials?](#) Science, September 14, 2020.
- ⇒ [How common is burnout among physicians? It depends on how it is defined.](#) STAT News, September 9, 2020.
- ⇒ [The U.S. must do some heavy lifting to prepare for heritable genome editing.](#) STAT News, September 4, 2020.
- ⇒ [Who should get the Covid-19 vaccine first?](#) Science Daily, September 3, 2020.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

32ND ANNUAL DOROTHY J. MACLEAN FELLOWS CONFERENCE ON CLINICAL MEDICAL ETHICS

DATE: Friday, November 13 - Saturday, November 14
TIME: 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM
LOCATION: All Events will take place over Zoom

Open to the public and FREE of charge

For more information and to register, [click here](#).



BIOETHICS SERVICES AT THE UIHC

ETHICS CONSULT SERVICE

This service is a resource for patients, family members, or health professionals at UIHC who would like help addressing an ethical question or problem related to a patient's care. Consults can be ordered by UIHC clinicians through EPIC. Consults can also be requested by calling (319) 356-1616 and asking for 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](#).

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