

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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PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHT

Evaluation of a Novel Question Prompt List in Pediatric Surgical Oncology

Erica M. Carlisle, Laura A. Shinkunas, Maxwell T. Lieberman,
Richard M. Hoffman, Heather Schacht Reisinger

[Journal of Surgical Research](#)

Introduction: Parents of children with cancer describe interactions with clinicians as emotionally distressing. Patient engagement in treatment discussions decreases decisional conflict and improves decision quality which may limit such distress. We have shown that parents prefer to engage surgeons by asking questions, but parents may not know what to ask. Question Prompt Lists (QPLs), structured lists of questions designed to help patients ask important questions, have not been studied in pediatric surgery. We developed a QPL designed to empower parents to ask meaningful questions during pediatric surgical oncology discussions. We conducted a mixed methods analysis to assess the acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility of using the QPL.

Methods: Key stakeholders at an academic children's hospital participated in focus groups to discuss the QPL. Focus groups were recorded and transcribed. Participants were surveyed regarding QPL acceptability, appropriateness, and feasibility. Thematic content analysis of transcripts was performed.

Results: Four parents, five nurses, five nurse practitioners, five oncologists, and four surgeons participated. Seven key themes were identified: (1) QPL as a tool of empowerment; (2) stick to the surgical details; (3) QPLs can impact discussion quality; (4) time consuming, but not overly disruptive; (5) parental emotion may impact QPL use; (6) provide QPLs prior to surgical consultation in both print and digital formats; and (7) expansion of QPLs to other disciplines. Over 70% of participants agreed that the QPL was acceptable, appropriate, and feasible.

Conclusions: Our novel QPL is acceptable, appropriate, and feasible to use with parents of pediatric surgical oncology patients.

To read the full article, [click here](#).



HUMANITIES CORNER

This month's spotlight is on **Jacqueline Smart, a 4th year medical student**. Her creative work is a haiku and 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.

A Veteran's Farewell

Tender hands offer
Comfort in life's waning days,
Honoring the end.

I wrote this haiku during my Internal Medicine sub-internship at the Iowa City VA. During my rotation, I had the privilege of taking care of two veterans who were both transitioned to hospice care while inpatient at the VA. Alongside the palliative care team, I was able to take part in multiple goals of care discussions with these veterans. Through these conversations, I was better able to understand what patients value at the end of life. These veterans shared their personal perspectives on death, which were uniquely influenced by their experience in the military. They shared stories of their friends' deaths during their service or their own near-death experiences. In some ways, these experiences made them more familiar with death and less fearful when having conversations surrounding end of life. It was fascinating to hear their stories, but also witness the dichotomy between the frail, sick men that I had been taking care of everyday and the stories of their courageous feats in the military. Once these conversations took place and hospice measures were in place, I watched as my patients faced less suffering and were able to spend quality time with their loved ones at the bedside. My experience during my sub-internship at the VA gave me a new perspective on taking care of patients at the end of life. It provided an opportunity to honor the sacrifices of my veteran patients in the past while respecting their wishes in their final months of life.

LITERARY HIGHLIGHT FROM A CCOM FACULTY MEMBER

[Gold and Iron](#)

This is a poem by UI professor emeritus Dr. Carol Scott-Connor that was recently published in *Pulse: Vices from the Heart of Medicine*. As stated by the author, “the poem uses the image of the vase, discarded after someone’s death, to encapsulate the fragility of human life and how futile our operative interventions sometimes are.”



BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Arnold MJ, Dong T, Liotta R, Saguil AA, Durning SJ. Does masking MCAT scores during admissions increase equity? [Acad Med](#). 2023 Aug 3. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Berdida DJE. The mediating roles of moral courage and moral resilience between nurses’ moral distress and moral injury: An online cross-sectional study. [Nurse Educ Pract](#). 2023 Jul 24. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Berenson RA, Emanuel EJ. The Medicare physician fee schedule and unethical behavior. [JAMA](#). 2023; 330: 115-116.
- ⇒ Dowie A. Ethical sense, medical ethics education, and *maieutics*. [Med Teach](#). 2023; 45: 838-844.
- ⇒ Garland A, Morain S, Sugarman J. Do clinicians have a duty to participate in pragmatic clinical trials? [Am J Bioeth](#). 2023; 23: 22-32.
- ⇒ Hsu T-W, Huang C-H, Chuang L-J, Lee H-C, Wong C-S. Continuous quality improvement: Reducing informed consent form signing errors. [BMC Med Ethics](#). 2023; 24: 59.
- ⇒ Ignace L, Burton L, Mynott S, et al. Researchers’ responsibility to uphold indigenous rights. [Science](#). 2023; 381: 129-131.
- ⇒ Karches KE. The moral difference between faces & FaceTime. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2023; 53: 16-25.
- ⇒ Koch PM. What’s the harm in cardiopulmonary resuscitation? [J Med Philos](#). 2023 Jul 3. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Mainz JT. Medical AI: Is trust really the issue? [J Med Ethics](#). 2023 Jul 15. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Martins RS, Hassan M, Umar Z, Maqbool B. Shedding light on the hidden curriculum: A systematic review of ethics education during general surgery and subspecialty training. [J Surg Educ](#). 2023; 80: 1075-1088.



BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Mazza DN. Your son is a very sick boy: What one says matters. [JAMA](#). 2023 Aug 4. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Merner AR, Kostick-Quenet K, Campbell TA, et al. Participant perceptions of changes in psychosocial domains following participation in an adaptive deep brain stimulation trial. [Brain Stimulation](#). 2023; 16: 990-998.
- ⇒ Mirarchi F, Pope TM. Widespread misinterpretation of advance directives and portable orders for life-sustaining treatments threatens patient safety and causes undertreatment and overtreatment. [J Patient Saf](#). 2023; 19: 289-292.
- ⇒ Morain S, Largent E. Think pragmatically: Investigators' obligations to patient-subjects when research is embedded in care. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2023; 23: 10-21.
- ⇒ Morgan J, Neufeld SD, Holroyd H, et al. Community-engaged research ethics training (CERET): Developing accessible and relevant research ethics training for community-based participatory research with people with lived and living experience using illicit drugs and harm reduction workers. [Harm Reduct J](#). 2023; 20: 86.
- ⇒ Mukherjee S, Richardson N, Beresford B. Hospital healthcare experiences of children and young people with life-threatening or life-shortening conditions, and their parents: Scoping reviews and resultant conceptual frameworks. [BMC Pediatr](#). 2023; 23: 366.
- ⇒ Noorulhuda M, Grady C, Wakim P, Bernhard T, Cho HL, Danis M. Communication of patients' and family members' ethical concerns to their healthcare providers. [BMC Med Ethics](#). 2023; 24: 56.
- ⇒ Parsa-Parsi RW, Gillon R, Wiesing U. The revised international code of medical ethics: An exercise in international professional ethical self-regulation. [J Med Ethics](#). 2023 Jul 24. [Epub ahead of print]

“This article describes and discusses the International Code of Medical Ethics, its revision process, the controversial and uncontroversial issues, and the broad consensus achieved among WMA constituent members, representing over 10 million physicians worldwide.”

(Parsa-Parsi et al.)

- ⇒ Schell JO, Schenker Y, Piscitello G, et al. Implementing a serious illness risk prediction model: Impact on goals of care documentation. [J Pain Symptom Manage](#). 2023 Jul 31. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Sudore RL, Walling AM, Gibbs L, Rahimi M, Wenger NS. Implementation challenges for a multisite advance care planning pragmatic trial: Lessons learned. [J Pain Symptom Manage](#). 2023; 66: e265-e273.
- ⇒ Toll ET, Sinsky CA. The deep work of doctoring—prioritizing relationships in medicine. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2023 Jul 24. [Epub ahead of print]

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Tunzi M. Facing progress with pragmatism: Telemedicine and family medicine. [Hastings Cent Rep.](#) 2023; 53: 26-27.
- ⇒ Van Noorden R. Medicine is plagued by untrustworthy clinical trials. How many studies are faked or flawed? [Nature.](#) 2023; 619: 454-458.
- ⇒ Wilfond BS. The moral value of telemedicine to the physician-patient relationship. [Hastings Cent Rep.](#) 2023; 53: 28-29.
- ⇒ Wirpsa MJ, Galchutt P, Price CS, Schaefer B, Szilagyi C, Palmer PK. Mandatory covid-19 vaccination for healthcare workers: The experience of chaplains evaluating religious accommodation requests from coworkers. [Soc Sci Med.](#) 2023; 332: 116103.
- ⇒ Zhang TR, Castle E, Zhao LC. What pediatric robotic surgery since 2000 suggests about ethics, limits, and innovation. [AMA J Ethics.](#) 2023; 25: E637-642.

BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ This university classes uses color and emotion to explore the end of life. [The Conversation](#), August 22, 2023.
- ⇒ He needed a liver transplant. But did the risks outweigh the reward? [ProPublica](#), August 21, 2023.
- ⇒ Why drug shortages are having an outside impact on ovarian cancer patients. [STAT News](#), August 16, 2023.
- ⇒ North Carolina hospitals have sued thousands of their patients, a new report finds. [KFF Health News](#), August 16, 2023.
- ⇒ 1 in 3 U.S. hospitals severely affected by drug shortages, survey finds. [NBC News](#), August 10, 2023.
- ⇒ How a controversial US drug policy could be harming cancer patients worldwide. [Nature](#), August 9, 2023.
- ⇒ A new blood test may predict your Alzheimer's risk. Should you take it? [Wired](#), August 8, 2023.
- ⇒ Senators push IRS to launch nonprofit hospital probe. [STAT News](#), August 8, 2023.
- ⇒ What does the historic settlement won by Henrietta Lacks's family mean for others? [Science](#), August 7, 2023.
- ⇒ The hidden harms of CPR. [The New Yorker](#), August 5, 2023.
- ⇒ Settlement with family of Henrietta Lacks is an opportunity to reflect on inequalities in genetic research. [The Conversation](#), August 3, 2023.
- ⇒ Primary care physicians are learning how to fill the gaps in gender-affirming medicine. [STAT News](#), August 1, 2023.



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](#).