

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.

[More Details About
The Program](#)

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IOWA Carver College of Medicine

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

2025 ETHICS IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE



Dr. Scott Kim

On May 30th, the Program in Bioethics and Humanities hosted its 7th annual *Ethics in Healthcare* conference on the campus of the Carver College of Medicine in Iowa City. We were delighted to host professionals from throughout the state of Iowa, as well as several from Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Kentucky, and Texas to this in-person opportunity. We heard four excellent presentations and enjoyed the collaborative dialogue their topics inspired. Dr. Scott Kim examined the ethical, legal, and

clinical considerations of euthanasia and assisted suicide policies around the world. Dr. Erica Carlisle discussed workplace culture and the ethics of interpersonal interactions. Dr. Matthew DeCamp guided us through ethics and artificial intelligence in health care. And to finish out our day, Dr. Lauris Kaldjian explored the ethics of persuasion in shared decision

making in healthcare. Participants made the Conference a time of genuine engagement, and we all benefited from the wealth of experience, depth of insight, and range of perspectives brought to our discussions. A hearty 'Thank you' to all who participated, and we look forward to seeing you at *Ethics in Healthcare 2026 (May 29)!*



Dr. Matthew DeCamp



Dr. Erica Carlisle



Dr. Lauris Kaldjian



BIOETHICS TOPIC OF THE MONTH

DELIRIUM AND ETHICS IN PALLIATIVE CARE: MORE THAN MEDICATIONS

Key Articles

- ⇒ Agar MR, Lawlor PG, Quinn S, Draper B, Caplan GA, Rowett D, et al. Efficacy of oral risperidone, haloperidol, or placebo for symptoms of delirium among patients in palliative care: A randomized clinical trial. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2017; 177 :34-42.
- ⇒ Cassel EJ. The nature of suffering and the goals of medicine. [N Engl J Med](#). 1982; 306: 639-645.
- ⇒ Cassell EJ. Diagnosing suffering: A perspective. [Ann Intern Med](#). 1999; 131: 531-534.
- ⇒ Finucane AM, Jones L, Leurent B, Sampson EL, Stone P, Tookman A, et al. Drug therapy for delirium in terminally ill adults. [Cochrane Database Syst Rev](#). 2020; 1: CD004770.
- ⇒ Hamza Habib M, Zheng J, Kozlov E, Peng-Keller S, Ciurea A, Schildmann J, et al. Top ten tips palliative care clinicians should know about total pain. [J Palliat Med](#). 2025 May 7. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Hui D, Cheng SY, Paiva CE. Pharmacologic management of end-of-life delirium: Translating evidence into practice. [Cancers \(Basel\)](#). 2024;16: 2045.
- ⇒ Latimer E. Ethical challenges in cancer care. [J Palliat Care](#). 1992; 8: 65-70.
- ⇒ Rattner M. 'Total pain': Reverence and reconsideration. [Front Sociol](#). 2023; 8: 1286208.
- ⇒ Tavares T, Almeida J, Gonçalves E, Abelha F. Dexmedetomidine in palliative care: A versatile new weapon against delirium and pain-systematic review. [J Palliat Med](#). 2024; 27: 1390-1403.
- ⇒ Thomas C, Alici Y, Breitbart W, Bruera E, Blackler L, Sulmasy DP. Drugs, delirium, and ethics at the end of life. [J Am Geriatr Soc](#). 2024; 72: 1964-1972.
- ⇒ Wilson JE, Mart MF, Cunningham C, Shehabi Y, Girard TD, MacLulich AMJ, et al. Delirium. [Nat Rev Dis Primers](#). 2020; 6: 90.
- ⇒ Wood J. Cicely Saunders, 'total pain' and emotional evidence at the end of life. [Med Humanit](#). 2022; 48: 411-420.
- ⇒ Wood J. Cicely Saunders and the literary and cultural heritage of "total pain". [Lit Med](#). 2024; 42: 65-87.



BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Allen H, Tabery J. The black prisoners of Stateville: Race, research, and reckoning at the dawn of precision medicine. [JAMA](#). 2025 Jun 11. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Allyse MA, Agam P, Bombard Y, Feys R, Horstmann M, Kokayi A, et al. Building better medicine: Translational justice and the quest for equity in US healthcare. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Jun; 25: 11-25.
- ⇒ Bhatia R. The persons behind our patients-individualized assessment tools for personalized care. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025 Jun 2. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Blatter A, Gallois H, Evangelista E, Bensoussan Y, Bélisle-Pipon JC. "Voice is the new blood": A discourse analysis of voice AI health-tech start-up websites. [Front Digit Health](#). 2025 May; 7: 1568159.
- ⇒ Bowen JL, Abdulnour RE. Moving past "business as usual" for medical education. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025 Jun; 392: 2472-2473.
- ⇒ Carter BS, Cummings CL. Ethics, maternal-fetal interventions, and the technological imperative. [Semin Perinatol](#). 2025 May 28. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Cohen IG, Ajunwa I, Parikh RB. Medical AI and clinician surveillance - the risk of becoming quantified workers. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025 Jun; 392: 2289-2291.
- ⇒ Dock EL, Bowers C, Davis C, Sinha S. Using a modified surprise question in the intensive care unit for early palliative care. [Crit Care Nurse](#). 2025 Jun; 45: 41-46.
- ⇒ Foxworthy Scott S, Johnson NL, Bute JJ, Brann M, Imhausen-Slaughter D. "I delivered with a team where I recognized no one:" Understanding depersonalization of healthcare through women's birth stories. [J Med Humanit](#). 2025 May 29. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Grant NK, Hamilton LK, Ormita JM. Improving comprehension of consent forms in online research: An empirical test of four interventions. [J Empir Res Hum Res Ethics](#). 2025 Feb-Apr; 20: 46-54.
- ⇒ Holmes EG, Hartsock JA, Martin AS. Caring for patients with severe anorexia nervosa-a capacity evaluation cannot save us. [JAMA Psychiatry](#). 2025 Jun; 82: 547-548.

“If capacity becomes the primary focus, the burden of difficult decision-making is shifted from the physician to the patient. The physician’s values and beliefs shape the capacity evaluation, but the ultimate decision is framed as the patient’s ability to decide. For physicians uncomfortable with treating over objection, the capacity evaluation relieves them of that responsibility in the name of respecting patient autonomy.”

(Holmes et al.)

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

⇒ Hubbard E. Why US doctors are unionising. [BMJ](#). 2025 Jun; 389: r1091.

“We’ve got to the point where physicians now feel like they can’t sit by and let these things happen without having a voice at the table,” she says. “It’s part of our professional responsibility—and ethical and moral responsibility—to speak up when things are happening that can have such a negative impact on our patients.”

(Hubbard)

- ⇒ Idan D, Einav S. Primer on large language models: An educational overview for intensivists. [Crit Care](#). 2025 Jun; 29: 238.
- ⇒ Kluesner N, Barszcz J, Larson M. Supply shortages in medicine: An ethical challenge. [Journal of the Iowa Medical Society](#). 2025 Spring: 20.
- ⇒ Kolmes S, Thompson-Lastad A, Dirksen K, Tabari K, Holmes SM. Incorporating structural competency into clinical ethics: Piloting new bioethics education. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025 Summer; 36: 158-166.
- ⇒ Kreitmair K. The fundamental fallacy of "empathic AI". [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025 May-Jun; 55: 36-44.
- ⇒ Laferton JAC, Rief W, Shedden-Mora M. Improving patients' treatment expectations. [JAMA](#). 2025 Jun 4. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Modi ND, Menz BD, Awaty AA, Alex CA, Logan JM, McKinnon RA, et al. Assessing the system-instruction vulnerabilities of large language models to malicious conversion into health disinformation chatbots. [Ann Intern Med](#). 2025 Jun 24. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Morley G, Field RB. The moral distress model revisited: Integrating nurses' experiences in the United States and United Kingdom. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025 Summer; 36: 132-151.
- ⇒ Nananukul N, Kejriwal M. Medical school ranking and neighborhood characteristics of initial practice location among physicians. [JAMA Netw Open](#). 2025 May; 8: e2512474.

“The findings underscore the need for targeted initiatives to incentivize physicians, particularly specialists and top medical graduates, to practice in socioeconomically disadvantaged regions.”

(Nananukul and Kejriwal)

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Opel DJ, Gerstein MT, Carle AC, Fournier AK, Hargraves I, Lafata JE, et al. Saving shared decision-making. [J Gen Intern Med](#). 2025 Jun; 40: 1844-1847.
- ⇒ Owen GS, Keene AR, Sleeman KE. Assisted dying is an existential choice, not a treatment. [BMJ](#). 2025 Jun; 389: r1182.
- ⇒ Palmer A, Schwan D. Digital mental health tools and AI therapy chatbots: A balanced approach to regulation. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025 May-Jun; 55: 15-29.
- ⇒ Potter J, Reis DS, Lesandrini J, Nelson E. Patient perspectives on the authority of advance directives in times of conflict: A mixed methods study. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025 Summer; 36: 121-131.
- ⇒ Prince S, Lim JE. Black-box AI and patient autonomy. [Minds and Machines](#). 2025 Jun; 35: 24.
- ⇒ Ratti E, Morrison M, Jakab I. Ethical and social considerations of applying artificial intelligence in healthcare-a two-pronged scoping review. [BMC Med Ethics](#). 2025 May; 26: 68.
- ⇒ Tikkinen KAO, Halme ALE, Guyatt GH, Glasziou P. The impact of definitions of disease on overdiagnosis. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025 Jun 9. [Epub ahead of print]

“The evolving definition of disease shapes clinical care and public health, often medicalizing normal life variations and contributing to overdiagnosis. Physicians must discern whether symptoms stem from treatable conditions or are part of normal life....”

(Tikkinen et al.)

- ⇒ Turner K, Brummett A, Salter E. On what grounds? A pilot study of references used in clinical ethics consultation and education. [HEC Forum](#). 2025 Jun; 37: 159-177.
- ⇒ Warm EJ, Desai SS, Bowen JL. Navigating the discontinuity crisis in medical education. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025 Jun; 392: 2447-2457.
- ⇒ Webber J. Where trauma and trauma-informed care collide: Ethical considerations for emergency medicine. [CJEM](#). 2025 May 27. [Epub ahead of print]



BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ NIH memo pauses cancellations of medical research grants. [The New York Times](#), June 25, 2025.
- ⇒ A medical-history museum contends with its collection of human remains. [The New Yorker](#), June 23, 2025.
- ⇒ After her heart started to fail, a first-of-its-kind surgery saved her life. [CBS News](#), June 21, 2025.
- ⇒ Assisted dying—medical anthropologist on the complex practical and ethical road ahead. [The Conversation](#), June 21, 2025.
- ⇒ Why is caregiving so hard in America? The answers emerge in a new film. [NPR](#), June 20, 2025.
- ⇒ New IVF tool allows parents to screen genetics of embryos: Is it ethical? [Newsweek](#), June 20, 2025.
- ⇒ Curbing the overdose crisis requires professional standards, patient safety. [STAT News](#), June 19, 2025.
- ⇒ Supreme Court upholds Tennessee ban on transgender care for minors. [The New York Times](#), June 18, 2025.
- ⇒ HIV prevention drug hailed as a ‘breakthrough’ gets FDA approval. [NPR](#), June 18, 2025.
- ⇒ Warning over TikTok filming by hospital patients. [BBC](#), June 17, 2025.
- ⇒ They asked an A.I. chatbot questions. The answers sent them spiraling. [The New York Times](#), June 13, 2025.
- ⇒ Protecting the vulnerable, or automating harm? AI’s double-edged role in spotting abuse. [The Conversation](#), June 13, 2025.
- ⇒ Systematic reviews cited retracted articles, new study finds. [STAT News](#), June 12, 2025.
- ⇒ The young adults living with cancer [podcast]. [The Washing Post](#), June 12, 2025.
- ⇒ New York moves to allow terminally ill people to die on their own terms. [The New York Times](#), June 9, 2025.
- ⇒ Does Georgia’s fetal ‘personhood’ law mean a pregnant woman must stay on life support. [NPR](#), June 7, 2025.
- ⇒ US state passes law allowing experimental drugs to be prescribed—a model for the future? [The Conversation](#), June 6, 2025.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING

- ⇒ [Pediatric Pain & Palliative Care Annual Conference](#), November 6, 2025, Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, Coralville, Iowa

ONGOING

- ⇒ American Journal of Bioethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous webinars
- ⇒ Children's Mercy Kansas City: [Pediatric Ethics Podcast series](#)
- ⇒ Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences: [Events](#)
- ⇒ The Hastings Center: [Webinars](#) and [Events](#)
- ⇒ [Health Ethics](#) podcast with host Bryan Pilkington, PhD (Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine): Find on Google Podcasts, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Audible.
- ⇒ The MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics: [YouTube channel](#) containing previous lectures
- ⇒ Michigan State University Center for Bioethics and Social Justice: [Recorded Webinars](#)
- ⇒ Office for Human Research Protections [Luminaries Lecture Series](#)
- ⇒ University of Minnesota Center for Bioethics: [Events](#)

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](#).