

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.

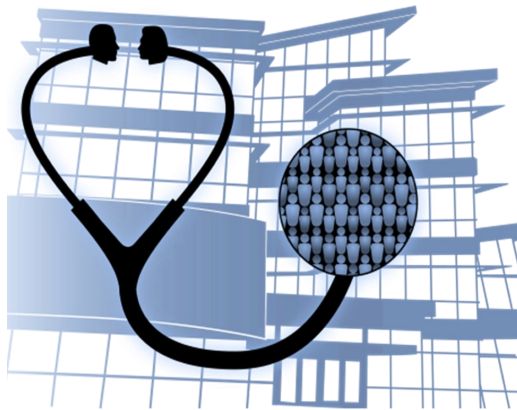
Program in Bioethics and Humanities: *Our Mission*

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](#)

ETHICS IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

Sponsored by the Program in Bioethics and Humanities,
Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa



Friday, May 29, 2026

About the Conference:

With the steady introduction of more treatment options and biotechnologies, an increasing number and range of ethical challenges in health care are emerging. This conference is designed to help professionals meet these challenges through their work as clinicians, members of ethics committees or ethics consult teams, and administrators.

This one-day conference for collaborative dialogue and inter-professional exchange seeks to provide up-to-date information in healthcare ethics relevant to clinical practice; provide approaches to ethical reasoning that clarify ethical problems; facilitate professional discussion of ethical challenges and decision making in healthcare; and encourage professional networking for ongoing dialogue, support, and collaboration.

Sessions will include the following topics and speakers:

- **The Moral Calibration of Professional Duty: How Responsible Am I for My Patient's Wellbeing?**
 - Aaron Kunz, DO, MA, MME, University of Iowa
- **Between Patient, Parent, and Professional: A Framework for Ethical Pediatric Decision-Making**
 - Erica Salter, PhD, HEC-C, Saint Louis University
- **AI and the Patient-Clinician Relationship**
 - Adam Cifu, MD, University of Chicago
- **Frequently Used Resources and References in Clinical Ethics Consultation**
 - Rebecca Benson, MD, PhD, University of Iowa

Additional information will be coming in the next few months.

HUMANITIES CORNER



This month's spotlight is on **Nicole McPhillips, a fourth year medical student**. Her creative work is a poem and written 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.

"To Quiet the Storm"

In halls where memory fades like mist,
she drifts between what's lost and missed –
a mind once sharp, now worn and torn,
held by hands unsure, forlorn.

She cries at shadows in the air,
flinches at sounds no one else can hear,
pleads for safety, lost, alone
facing fears we've never known.

Nurses note: *agitated*.

Doctors mark: *aggravated*.

The order is given soft and slow,
a whisper calm to quell the woe –
Risperidone, at night to keep,
a silent vow to bring her sleep.

That night she rests, the storm subdued,
the next day moves with quietude.

Her hands, once restless, tell her tales,
now folded still where silence hails.
The fear within her eyes grows dim,
but so does light that once burned within.

HUMANITIES CORNER (CONTINUED)

Is this peace or just a hush?
A gentle calm, or stifled rush?

Each day I wonder, pause, and weigh –
Are we calming pain or turning away?
Her suffering, or our own unease?

I miss her voice, her trembling pleas.
Her looping question, soft and clear –
I miss the woman who was here.

We meant to help, with care and grace,
yet sometimes healing hides its face.
For care can wear a coat of white,
yet miss the soul within the night.

What does this life feel like inside –
when memory and voice have died?

Reflective Narrative

Antipsychotics in dementia care exist in a gray space. While they can reduce acute suffering, they also mute expression, flatten personality, and blur the edges of who a person once was. The balance between protecting safety and preserving identity is fragile.

This poem is a reflection on that tension: the discomfort of watching someone fade not because of their illness alone, but perhaps also because of our interventions. It is a reminder to always ask: Are we doing this for the patient or for ourselves?

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Amin SC, Jenkins DC, Vercler CJ, Firn JI. Ethics consultations as a novel approach to needs assessments in surgical ethics curriculum development. [J Surg Educ](#). 2025 Oct; 82: 103654.
- ⇒ Angus DC, Khera R, Lieu T, Liu V, Ahmad FS, Anderson B, et al. AI, health, and health care today and tomorrow: The JAMA summit report on artificial intelligence. [JAMA](#). 2025 Oct 13. [Epub ahead of print]

“AI will disrupt every part of health and health care delivery in the coming years.”

(Angus et al.)

- ⇒ Campo R. Beyond empathy: When poetry hits you in the head hard. [JAMA](#). 2025 Oct 1. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Esbensen KL, DeCamp M, Crigger EJ, Snyder Sulmasy L, Esbensen KL. Ethical issues in organ transplantation: A position paper from the American College of Physicians. [Ann Intern Med](#). 2025 Oct 28. [Epub ahead of print]

“When caring for a patient who may become a donor, the physician’s primary obligation is to that patient. This places limits on what can be done to the patient before and during donation.”

(Esbensen et al.)

- ⇒ Fox E, Wasserman JA. Clinical ethics fellowship programs in the U.S. and Canada: A descriptive study of program characteristics and practices. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Oct; 25: 51-66.
- ⇒ Gaillard AS, Gather J, Haferkemper I, Vollmann J, Potthoff S, Scholten M, et al. A template for a psychiatric advance directive: Co-development and qualitative evaluation with key stakeholders. [Int J Law Psychiatry](#). 2025 Nov-Dec; 103: 102135.
- ⇒ George A, Peirce AG. Artificial intelligence in critical care nursing: Benefits, risks, and ethical considerations. [Crit Care Nurse](#). 2025 Oct 1; 45: 46-52.
- ⇒ Ghinea N. 'First ensure no regret': A decision-theoretic approach to informed consent in clinical practice. [J Med Ethics](#). 2023 May 8; 51: 789-790.
- ⇒ Haber LA, Erickson HP, Markowitz PL. Rights of immigration detainees to acute medical care. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025 Oct 6. [Epub ahead of print]

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Ilgen JS, Dhaliwal G. Educational strategies to prepare trainees for clinical uncertainty. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025 Oct 23; 393: 1624-1632.
- ⇒ Jean-Pierre J, Collins T, Agnant K, Boatswain-Kyte A, Herman C, Mathews T, et al. Broadening core research ethics principles: Insights from research conducted with black communities. [Ethics Hum Res](#). 2025 Sep-Oct; 47: 2-12.
- ⇒ Kilbride MK. Breaching confidentiality in genetic and non-genetic cases: Two problematic distinctions. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Oct; 25: 9-21.
- ⇒ Klitzman R. New legal measures restricting gender-affirming care: Implications for research ethics. [Ethics Hum Res](#). 2025 Sep-Oct; 47: 24-28.
- ⇒ Knudsen B, Madkour A, Cholli P, Haslam A, Prasad V. Analysis of the political viewpoint of policy statements from professional medical organizations using ChatGPT with GPT-4: Cross-sectional study. [JMIR Form Res](#). 2025 Jun 13; 9: e66204.

“We found that 33.2% (529/1592) of policy statements from 6 highly regarded medical organizations were nonneutral and correlated with a set of political values. Of these statements, the majority (516/529, 97.5%) were aligned with a liberal or probably liberal viewpoint, whereas only 2.5% (13/529) aligned with a conservative or probably conservative viewpoint.”

(Knudsen et al.)

- ⇒ Krieger N, Bassett MT. Structural and scientific racism, science, and health - evidence versus ideology. [N Engl J Med](#). 2025 Sep 25; 393: 1145-1148.
- ⇒ Li Y, Li F, Li Y, Zhou Q. Experiences and perspectives of older adults in nursing homes and their families participating in advance care planning: A meta-synthesis of qualitative studies. [BMC Palliat Care](#). 2025 Sep 22; 24: 227.
- ⇒ Liu S, Yang Y, Li M. Interventions to promote medical research integrity: a scoping review. [BMC Med Ethics](#). 2025 Sep 24; 26: 117.
- ⇒ Morgan DJ, Rodman A, Goodman KE. How physicians can prepare for generative AI. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025 Oct 13.

“All physicians will need to understand the basics of GenAI to practice medicine in the next decade. Those without this understanding may find themselves burdened by archaic workflows or responsible for errors that GenAI could have prevented.”

(Morgan et al.)

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Opel DJ, Ross LF, O'Leary ST. Ethical basis of the pediatric vaccine encounter-correcting the record. [JAMA Pediatr](#). 2025 Oct 27. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Owens K, Griffen Z, Damaraju L. Managing a "responsibility vacuum" in AI monitoring and governance in healthcare: A qualitative study. [BMC Health Serv Res](#). 2025 Sep 29; 25: 1217.
- ⇒ Porcel-Gálvez AM, Iñiguez-Castro EO, Martínez-Lacovic G, Allande-Cussó R. Exploring the ethical dimensions of care dependency in older people: A transpersonal view. [Scand J Caring Sci](#). 2025 Dec; 39: e70127.
- ⇒ Rothstein MA. Research participant bill of rights: Clarifying the role of research physicians. [Ethics Hum Res](#). 2025 Sep-Oct; 47: 29-36.
- ⇒ Saeed F, Jawed A, Gazaway S, Hall RK, Klein-Fedyshin M, Bowling B, et al. Supporting shared decision-making in life-altering kidney therapy decisions for older adults: A review. [JAMA Intern Med](#). 2025 Oct 27. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Sanaka S, Damiani E, Ray KN, Vajravelu ME. Ethical framework for weight loss medication use in youth. [JAMA Pediatr](#). 2025 Oct 27. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Trimble M, Croskerry P. Pellegrino and Thomasma's anatomy of clinical judgments revisited. [J Med Philos](#). 2025 Sep 29. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Wagensonner F, Sahm A, Frewer A. End-of-life decisions and ethics on the big screen: Reflecting narratives of 'a life fully lived'. [Med Health Care Philos](#). 2025 Sep 26. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Wahood S, Alani O, Bui J, Nana N, Rowe K, Franklin Z, et al. Ethics of physically restraining pediatric patients: Balancing necessity and autonomy. [J Am Acad Dermatol](#). 2025 Sep 2. [Epub ahead of print]



BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ Families like mine depend on their local pharmacy for medicine—and for survival. [STAT News](#), October 27, 2025.
- ⇒ How much should healthy medical research volunteers get paid? [STAT News](#), October 25, 2025.
- ⇒ AI mammogram readings are already helping doctors detect brain cancer. [NBC News](#), October 22, 2025.
- ⇒ Music could help ease pain from surgery or illness. Scientists are listening. [Associated Press](#), October 18, 2025.
- ⇒ An age-old fear grows more common: ‘I’m going to die alone.’ [KFF Health News](#), October 16, 2025.
- ⇒ In a regional first, Uruguay passes a law allowing euthanasia. [AP via MSN](#), October 15, 2025.
- ⇒ In rural America, scarce doctors battle misinformation as they practice medicine. [NPR](#), October 15, 2025.
- ⇒ AI couldn’t picture a woman like me—until now. [BBC](#), October 14, 2025.
- ⇒ The dark history of medical illustrations and the question of consent. [The Conversation](#), October 13, 2025.
- ⇒ Who deserves an organ? The dilemma of severe mental illness. [The New York Times](#), October 12, 2025.
- ⇒ Iran lures transgender foreigners for surgery but forces operations on locals. [The New York Times](#), October 10, 2025.
- ⇒ ‘Guilty until proven innocent’: Inside the fight between doctors and insurance companies over ‘downcoding.’ [NBC News](#), October 9, 2025.
- ⇒ Organ transplant network oversight stalled due to shutdown. [Axios](#), October 8, 2025.
- ⇒ It’s just a virus, the E.R. told him. Days later, he was dead. [The New York Times](#), October 6, 2025.
- ⇒ Conflict at the drugstore: When pharmacists’ and patients’ values collide. [The Conversation](#), October 6, 2025.
- ⇒ How private equity oversees the ethics of drug research. [The New York Times](#), October 4, 2025.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING

- ⇒ [Pediatric Pain & Palliative Care Annual Conference](#), Thursday, November 6, 2025, 8:00am-4:00pm, 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](#).