

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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ETHICS IN HEALTHCARE CONFERENCE

Friday, May 29, 2026 | 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Medical Education Research Facility (MERF)
Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa



SESSION ONE

The Moral Calibration of Professional Duty: How Responsible Am I for My Patient's Wellbeing?

Aaron Kunz, DO, MA, MME



SESSION TWO

Between Patient, Parent, and Professional: A Framework for Ethical Pediatric Decision-Making

Erica Salter, PhD, HEC-C



SESSION THREE

AI and the Patient-Clinician Relationship

Adam Cifu, MD



SESSION FOUR

Frequently Used Resources and References in Clinical Ethics Consultation

Rebecca Benson, MD, PhD

Intended Audience:

Administrators, Attorneys, Chaplains, Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physicians, Physician Assistants, Social Workers, Students, Trainees, and Others

**Scan the QR code for full conference
details and a link to registration.**



Space is limited to 60 attendees, please register early.

PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHT

A System...for Retaliation, Bullying [and] Intimidation:" A Survey of Operating Room Employee Perceptions of the Impact of Online Coworker Reporting Systems on Workplace Ethics and Employee Wellness

Laura A. Shinkunas, Maxwell T. Lieberman, Kristine Corkum, Taylor Perry, Cody Dalton, Catherine Hunter, Erica M. Carlisle

[Journal of Surgical Research](#)

Introduction: Hospitals offer coworker reporting systems to empower employees to report unsafe/unprofessional behavior. The impact of reporting systems on workplace ethics and employee wellness remains unexplored. Evaluating the impact of these systems is particularly important in high-stress work environments. Here, we assess operating room (OR) staff attitudes toward coworker reporting systems, and the impact these systems have on workplace ethics and employee wellness.

Methods: A mixed-methods, cross-sectional study electronically surveying OR employees at three US academic medical centers.

Results: A total of 280 responses were received (67% attendings, 19% trainees, and 14% staff). Briefly, 33% of the respondents had used their institution's online reporting system to report a coworker; 38% had been reported. Twenty-four percent of the respondents felt that their concerns were addressed through the reporting system, and 13% thought that their coworker's behavior changed after the report. Forty-eight percent of the respondents witnessed reporting systems being used for retaliation, bullying, or intimidation. Being reported negatively impacted wellness (80%), attitudes toward coworkers (75%), attitudes toward the institution (73%), and interactions with coworkers (51%). Reported employees were more likely to feel bullied by coworkers (15% reported/4% not reported, $P = 0.002$), to fear retribution if they spoke up about a concern (28% reported/8% not reported, $P < 0.001$), to have considered quitting due to moral distress (17% reported/4% not reported, $P \leq 0.001$), to report working within power hierarchies that compromise patient care (22% reported/11% not reported, $P = 0.021$), and to experience lack of administrative support (32% reported/12% not reported, $P < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Online coworker reporting systems negatively impact OR employee perceptions of wellness and workplace ethics, fail to address concerns, and provide pathways for retaliation, bullying, and intimidation.

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

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE

- ⇒ Blackstone EC, Mazanec SR, Daly BJ, Dorth JA, Montero AJ, Aulisio MP, et al. Whose autonomy matters? Using relational autonomy to analyze caregiver roles in decision-making for cancer clinical trials. [AJOB Empir Bioeth](#). 2025 Oct-Dec; 16: 267-276.
- ⇒ Bobier C. Is there a problem with false fear in medicine? [Perspect Biol Med](#). 2025; 68: 414-426.
- ⇒ Borthakur D, Diep P, Plaks JE. Inequity aversion toward AI counterparts. [Sci Rep](#). 2025 Oct 29; 15: 37916.
- ⇒ Brudney D. Substituted judgment and the paradigm case mistake. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Nov; 25: 66-73.
- ⇒ Cain CL. Dignity, personhood, or sacred selves? Complicating medical literature and caregiver narratives in dementia care. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025 Jul-Aug; 55 Suppl 1: S64-S70.
- ⇒ Cheung K, Propes C, Graziosi M, Patch K, Yaden DB. Informed consent documents from psychedelic clinical trials: A descriptive ethical analysis. [AJOB Empir Bioeth](#). 2025 Oct-Dec; 16: 247-266.
- ⇒ Druart L, Annoni M, Blease C. Ethical considerations with using placebo treatments and effects in clinical practice. [Handb Clin Neurol](#). 2025; 213: 277-287.
- ⇒ Griffin TA, Goorman R, Green BP, Welie JVM. Hidden agents, explicit obligations: A linguistic analysis of AI ethics guidelines. [Sci Eng Ethics](#). 2025 Oct 29; 31: 32.
- ⇒ Gunturkun P, Studte S, Winkler D, Clement M, Tan JHW, Merz EM, et al. Crowding-out effects of opt-out defaults: Evidence from organ donation policies. [PNAS Nexus](#). 2025 Oct; 4: pgaf311.
- ⇒ Haustein T, Jox RJ. Allocation of treatment slots in elective mental health care—are waiting lists the ethically most appropriate option? [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Nov; 25: 89-98.
- ⇒ Hernandez I, Nuñez V, Reynaga L, Stewart K, Hernandez-Castro I, Maldonado LE, et al. Non-inclusive language in human subjects questionnaires: Addressing racial, ethnic, heteronormative, and gender bias. [BMC Public Health](#). 2025 Oct 31; 25: 3708.
- ⇒ Howe EG. Nancy Dubler's contributions to clinical ethics consultation. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025 Winter; 36: 295-302.
- ⇒ Kelly B, Gallegos C, Quon AC. Moral distress, coping resilience, and self-care: A study of nurses in the intensive care unit. [Am J Crit Care](#). 2025 Nov 1; 34: 451-457.
- ⇒ Kon RH, Ali S, Martindale JR, Flickinger TE. Depersonalization burnout in medical students is associated with choosing acute care rather than longitudinal care specialties. [J Gen Intern Med](#). 2025 Nov; 40: 3768-3771.

“Future studies incorporating other factors could also help assess the role that burnout plays in the complex decision-making behind specialty choice.”

(Kon et al.)

BIOETHICS IN THE LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

- ⇒ Koswatta TJ, Hoepfer S, Reed PS, Carson J. Personhood beliefs in dementia care: Influences of race, socioeconomic factors, and social vulnerability. [Int J Environ Res Public Health](#). 2025 Sep 26; 22.
- ⇒ Lamb EG, Wohlmann A. Dementia as a critical lens on the role of narrative in medical training and practice. [Hastings Cent Rep](#). 2025 Jul-Aug; 55 Suppl 1: S57-S63.
- ⇒ Lopez-Ramos LM, Pluktaite G, Bui CKT, Amann J, Haven T, Madai VI. Operationalizing AI ethics in medicine—a co-creation workshop study. [BMC Med Ethics](#). 2025 Oct 29; 26: 150.
- ⇒ Maqbool B. RISE: Resident initiative in surgical ethics. Creating a comprehensive curriculum for general surgery residents. [J Surg Educ](#). 2025 Nov; 82: 103712.
- ⇒ McCarthy M. Responsible decision making for ai in healthcare: Exploring the role of ethics consultants at the intersection of ethics and AI. [HEC Forum](#). 2025 Nov 9. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Moore B, Caruso Brown A. Do reasons matter? Navigating parents' reasons in healthcare decisions for children. [Am J Bioeth](#). 2025 Nov; 25: 6-21.
- ⇒ Nagata JM, Memon Z, Huang O, Moreno MA. Adolescent health and generative AI—risks and benefits. [JAMA Pediatr](#). 2025 Nov 10. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Porsdam Mann S, Seah JJ, Latham S, Savulescu J, Aboy M, Earp BD. Chat-IRB? How application-specific language models can enhance research ethics review. [J Med Ethics](#). 2025 Aug 19. [Epub ahead of print]
- ⇒ Verstegen PMB, Kole JJJ, Groenewoud AS, Hoogen F. How residents develop virtues: A qualitative longitudinal study. [J Surg Educ](#). 2025 Oct 31; 83: 103762.
- ⇒ Zhang J. Reevaluating benevolent deception: A trust-oriented approach to ethical mediation in multicultural healthcare. [J Clin Ethics](#). 2025 Winter; 36: 353-362.
- ⇒ Zhang SK, Rodman A. From dyad to triad: Artificial intelligence in the patient–physician relationship. [Ann Intern Med](#). 2025; 4: e251027.



“LLMs are now a part of the physician–patient relationship; this case of bromism underscores the importance of ensuring that LLMs are integrated in ways that enhance, rather than undermine, thoughtful, human-centered patient care.”

(Zhang and Rodman)

BIOETHICS IN THE NEWS

- ⇒ Once a patient's in custody, ICE can be at hospital bedsides—but detainees have rights. [KFF Health News](#), November 17, 2025.
- ⇒ What if your hospital became a site of immigration enforcement? [MedPage Today](#), November 17, 2025.
- ⇒ Empathetic, available, cheap: When A.I. offers what doctors don't. [The New York Times](#), November 17, 2025.
- ⇒ Meet Dr. ChatGPT. [The New York Times](#), November 16, 2025.
- ⇒ I spent two hours telling a chatbot about mental health problems. Its responses scared me. [STAT News](#), November 15, 2025.
- ⇒ In memoriam: The sudden demise of the AMA Journal of Ethics. [MedPage Today](#), November 14, 2025.
- ⇒ 'Nuremberg': Can you diagnose evil? [MedPageToday](#), November 11, 2025.
- ⇒ I'm a physician who went to the anti-vaccine movement's biggest gathering. More of my colleagues should too. [STAT News](#), November 11, 2025.
- ⇒ Who speaks for the dead? Rethinking consent in ancient DNA research. [The Conversation](#), November 11, 2025.
- ⇒ Make medical school three years. [The New York Times](#), November 10, 2025.
- ⇒ Silent but not serene: What science says about nitrogen death. [The Conversation](#), November 7, 2025.
- ⇒ James Watson, who co-discovered the structure of DNA, has died at age 97. [NPR](#), November 7, 2025.
- ⇒ Sudbury woman says 'hallway health care' led her father to apply for a medically-assisted death. [CBC News](#), November 6, 2025.
- ⇒ Frankenstein: Could an assembled body ever breathe, bleed or think? Anatomists explain. [The Conversation](#), November 6, 2025.
- ⇒ The editor got a letter from 'Dr. B.S.' So did a lot of other editors. [The New York Times](#), November 4, 2025.
- ⇒ These doctors want to break the cycle of shame and blame in medicine. [NPR](#), October 28, 2025.



BIOETHICS OPPORTUNITIES

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](#).