

July 2024 | Issue 6

CLINICAL ETHICS CAPACITY BUILDING

Clinical Ethics Capacity Building

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Ethics conferences



Dec 1 - 4 2024 in Sydney

2024 AABHL Conference
Fresh insights on challenges old and new.

WWW.AABHLCONFERENCE.COM



Sept 4 - 6 2024 in Melbourne

15th National Paediatrics
Bioethics Conference

WWW.RCH.ORG.AU/BIOETHICS/EDUCATION/CONFERENCE

Referrals

Please contact **Dr Danielle Ko** by phone, email or TEAMS

Education

To request an education session, please email clinicaethics@austin.org.au

Austin Health Clinical Ethics & Decision Support (CEADS) unit aims to develop clinical ethics capacity through learning opportunities and clinical ethics case consultations. Last year we ran a total of 12 ethics education sessions to assist clinicians in dealing with ethical challenges.

Ethics education however can also start at the grassroots. CEADS has supported a Clinical Ethics Internship (a joint initiative of Austin Health and University of Melbourne, Dept of Surgery) and our first intern a 3rd Year UniMelb MD student suggested setting up a Student Clinical Ethics Committee (SCEC).

Medical students witness and experience ethical challenges throughout their placements and ethics education is essential to prepare them with skills to respond to these situations. SCECs are a novel way to develop early recognition of ethical issues in practice and clinical ethics reasoning skills, which are central to good patient care.

The SCEC is a new initiative at UniMelb Medical School, established collaboratively by ethicists from CEADS, UniMelb, and our clinical ethics intern. Participation is open to all MD year levels and is voluntary and extracurricular. Since conception in April 2024, MD student interest in the SCEC has exceeded expectations, with over 80 expressions of interest from current students. Three months on, and following online training, we now have three parallel SCECs with approximately 25 students in each group.

Each SCEC discusses an (anonymised) clinical case referred by MD students from their own experiences. The SCEC Working Group reviews and selects the most suitable cases for the SCECs to consider, and in our first round of SCEC meetings students deliberated on challenges with respecting patient autonomy, including the limits of shared decision-making and discharge against medical advice. Each SCEC meeting is chaired by a clinical ethicist and case discussions are framed using the Royal Children's Hospital Critical Dialogue Method.

Further SCEC meetings will be held in August, October and November.

This is a pilot project for 2024 and the SCEC will be evaluated as a learning and teaching initiative at the end of the year. We hope that the SCEC will help build a community of practice of ethics enthusiasts and inspire them to become future leaders in clinical ethics.

Articles of interest

[A case presented to the Student Clinical Ethics Committee at Kings College London - A patient changes her mind about surgery—should her later refusal be respected?](#)

[Critical reflection skills in analysing professional practice - Learning where others are coming from](#)

[The important skill of recognising ethical issues in practice - Combating junior doctors' "4am logic": a challenge for medical ethics education.](#)

IN THE NEWS & LITERATURE

Infected blood scandal in the UK

Around 30,000 people in the UK have been infected with contaminated blood products, following use of blood donated in the United States by people with known HIV / hepatitis C risk. The Infected Blood Inquiry issued its final report on 20 May 2024, the summary noting, 'systemic, collective and individual failures to deal ethically, appropriately, and quickly, with the risk of infections being transmitted in blood...!'

The next Newsletter will consider how this relates to personal clinical practice, and the issues of truth telling and veracity.

Infected blood scandal: "Chilling" cover up hid truth for decades, public inquiry finds.

CLINICAL ETHICS AND DECISION SUPPORT
CEADS
Unit staff



Dr Danielle Ko
Head of Unit



Sharon Feldman
Clinical Ethicist



Dr Carolyn Johnston
Clinical Ethicist



Kat Hall
CEADS Unit
Co-ordinator



Michele Gaca
Honorary
Informationist



Jerry Luo
Clinical Ethics
Intern

Medical Grand Rounds

Restraint as treatment

— a case of medical necessity?

Wednesday 28th of August
12:45 on Teams

New @ Austin Health library

Clinical Ethics, Vol 19 (2), June 2024

Phenomenologies of Care: Patient's, Caregivers and Narratives.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	12 Feb CEC meeting		24 Apr 1400-1445 Ethics forum	CEADS Newsletter 13 May CEC meeting ICCEC Conference May 29-31		17 Jul 1400-1445 Ethics Forum CEADS Newsletter	12 Aug CEC meeting 28 Aug Grand Rounds <i>Restraint as treatment</i> — a case of medical necessity?	CEADS Newsletter	30 Oct 1400-1445 Ethics forum	11 Nov CEC meeting	CEADS Newsletter