



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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Abstract Submission Form – Major Papers

Please contact John Tuohey at ethics@providence.org with any questions.

Name: 1. Dr Eleanor Milligan 2. Dr Sarah Winch

Title/Degree: 1. Clinical Ethicist/Senior Lecturer in Ethics and Professional Practice, PhD, GradDipEd,BA(hons),BSc

2. Senior Lecturer, Medical Ethics, PhD, BNurs

Institution: 1. Princess Alexandra Hospital/Griffith University School of Medicine

2. Queensland University School of Medicine

Country: Australia

Email: Eleanor milligan@health.qld.gov.au; e.milligan@griffith.edu.au

Phone including country code (<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com>): 61 7 5499 7930

Proposed title of paper: From the ground up (or “How to build a clinical ethics service for Dummies”)

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Australian hospitals have been slow to embrace the role of Clinical Ethicists, and Clinical Ethics Committees. However, the need to develop organisational structures, and promote ethical organisational climates, in which staff and patients are supported, is becoming increasingly acknowledged as important. The desire to nurture such an appropriate, ethically sensitive and inclusive organisational climate for staff and patients led staff at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane, Australia to proactively design and implement an integrated clinical ethics support service. As a ‘new’ idea to Queensland Health, staff seized this opportunity to look through fresh eyes in considering the particular ethical needs of “our” patients, “our” staff and “our” organisation. This was also a chance to start from scratch, to learn from the strengths and weaknesses of well established models in the USA and Canada when tailoring a service for our needs. This paper will

1. Explain how and why the service was devised and implemented.

2. Explore the challenges, successes and failures of starting from scratch.

3. Consider why the complementary philosophical orientation and educational foundations on which the service was built continue to be an ongoing source of strength.

What significant contribution to the field of clinical ethics consultation does this presentation make?
(250 words)

A new and significant aspect of Clinical Ethics presented in this paper is the intentional consideration of how the insights from complementary disciplines of philosophy, education, ethics and medicine were deliberately integrated into the service design and implementation to create a practical, meaningful and accessible service for health care staff, patients and the organisation.

It is also significant in that it confronts the difficulties of pioneering the "foreign" (to many Australian health care professionals) idea of seeking external ethical support in the clinic. This has proven to be an art of balancing in itself, the art of showing worth, of systematically building trust in clinicians, and of demonstrating perseverance and genuine commitment to open a safe moral space in our organisation.

If you have or will publish on this topic, please cite reference:

Are you planning to or will you be willing to submit a poster along with your major paper?

Yes No