



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

May 11-14, 2010 ♦ Portland Art Museum ♦ Portland, Oregon, USA

www.ethics2010.org



Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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

Name: Mary Beth Foglia (presenting); Barbara Chanko RN MBA; Robert A Pearlman MD MPH; Kenneth Berkowitz MD

Title/Degree: RN PhD MA

Institution: National Center for Ethics in Health Care , Veterans Health Administration

Country: United States

Email: marybeth.foglia@va.gov

Phone including country code (<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com>): 206-277-5121

Proposed title of paper: Identifying Underlying Systems Issues in Ethics Case Consultation

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

- 1) Describe how systems factors contribute to recurrent ethics cases
- 2) Define methods of identifying systems factors that contribute to ethics cases
- 3) Describe types of systems issues identified from a review of aggregated consultation data from a large integrated health care network.

Ethics cases are embedded in, and influenced by, the larger organizational context in which they arise. Therefore, many ethics cases have systems-level causal or contributory antecedents. This means that recurrent cases may predict future, similar cases unless underlying systems issues are recognized and remedied. The contemporary ethics consultant has a duty to become proficient in identifying potential systems issues in ethics cases, and remedying issues directly, or when complex, by referral to an institutional mechanism that can take appropriate action (e.g., quality management, executive board). An ethics consultant who is sensitive to a systems perspective will routinely look beneath the surface for predisposing factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of ethical concerns. Simple tools (e.g., 5 Why's) exist for those consultants aiming to increase their proficiency in identifying the systemic basis of ethics cases. Once identified, many systemic issues can and should be addressed through a quality improvement approach, resulting in measurable and sustained improvement in ethics practices. Importantly, efforts to address systemic causes of ethics concerns may reduce the recurrence of routine (less complex) cases. Since ethics consultants are generally a limited (and sometimes scarce) institutional resource, reducing recurring ethics cases may enable the ethics consultant to expand the scope of services proffered.

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

Foglia, MB; Pearlman RA. A Systems Perspective Can Provide an Antidote to the "Silo" Problem in Clinical Ethics Consultations , 2006 Mar-Apr;87(2):31-5

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

Yes No