



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.

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Proposed title of paper: Navigating the Murky Intersection between Clinical & Organizational Ethics: A Hybrid Case Taxonomy

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Ethical challenges that arise within healthcare delivery institutions are currently categorized as either clinical or organizational based on the type of issue. Despite this common binary issue-based methodology, empirical study and increasing academic dialogue indicate that a clear line cannot easily be drawn between organizational and clinical ethics. Disagreement around end-of-life treatments, for example, often spawn value differences amongst parties at both organizational and clinical levels and requires a resolution to address both the case at hand and large-scale underlying system-level confounders. I refer to issues that contain elements of both clinical and organizational issues as hybrids and propose a new taxonomy to characterize hybrid cases. I contend that salient contextual features of an ethical issue, such as where it is identified, who it impacts and where it is ideally resolved in relation to its scope of impact, should inform procedure. Implementation of a Hybrid taxonomy viewing ethical issues as existing on a continuum furthers that end. The primary goals are to 1) systematize thinking about ethical issues that arise within healthcare delivery institutions 2) allow the content of the ethical challenge to drive the process rather than continuing to rely on the traditional binary issue-based choice and 3) share an implementation strategy. Failure to capture the complexity of hybrid situations perpetuates incomplete information and ultimately an inchoate resolution that creates more questions than answers.

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

Raise awareness of the limitations of the traditional issue-based categorization model and provide an alternative taxonomy to fill the identified gap. The proposed alternative taxonomy will promote

reorientation of thinking about ethical issues as existing on a continuum. This reorientation will focus attention on salient contextual features of an ethical issue, such as where it is identified, who it impacts, and where it is best resolved. Share implementation strategy of the Hybrid Taxonomy in an academic medical centre through a web-based consultation database and the positive impact it has had in one complex healthcare delivery environment.

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

Bean, S. Navigating the Murky Intersection between Clinical & Organizational Ethics:

A Hybrid Case Taxonomy. Bioethics. (2009, in press).

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

Yes No