



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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www.ethics2010.org



Abstract Submission Form – Panels

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

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Primary contact: Martha Jurchak

Additional panelists, if any (up to three):

Name: Ellen Robinson

Title/Degree: RN, PhD; Clinical Specialist in Ethics

Institution: Massachusetts General Hospital; Boston, MA

Country: USA

Name: Carol Powers

Title/Degree: JD; Chairperon, Harvard Community Ethics Committee

Institution: Harvard Medical School; Division of Medical Ethics

Country: USA

Name: _____

Title/Degree: _____

Institution: _____

Country: _____

Proposed Session Title: "Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Not Medically Indicated": Conceptual, Community, and Policy Development

Describe topic or case to be discussed up to 300 words:

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), despite being an intervention used for over 40 years, continues to plague us. The questions about its clinical utility, personal meaning, and symbolic significance at the end of life muddy the waters of shared decision making like no other intervention. When is it

appropriate to use? Is there a time when it's clinically not indicated? Where do patients and families obtain their knowledge about CPR? When is CPR considered futile to attempt? Like many "futility" claims, is the withholding of CPR over a family's insistence that it occur an imposition of a value judgment? What are the ethical arguments for or against "unilateral" Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) orders? This panel represents several perspectives on the attempt to engage these questions. The aim of this panel is to illustrate a creative approach to address this vexing ethical dilemma - to take into account both clinicians' struggles as they arise in acute care hospitals and the public's perception of rights and overall goals of care. This creative approach begins with clarifying the clinical prevalence of the problem. Once clarity is provided about the ethical question from a clinicians' perspective, then the next question can be raised - What does the community think about the issue of not initiating CPR? What happens when families demand it but clinicians' judgments indicate it poses more harm than clinical benefit? Once the community perspective is obtained, we can then address the process of developing institutional policy that reflects an ethically sound position. And we can begin the process of education - of clinicians, patients, family members and the public - all of whom need a creative approach to solve a challenging ethical dilemma. The art of an ethics consultation makes sure to include the multi-faceted perspectives of clinicians, patients, families and the community at large.

Describe briefly each proposed panelist's position to be offered (up to 300 words):

The first panelist, Ellen Robinson, will present on the development of the understanding of the clinical problem and the conceptual framing of the issue. Dr. Robinson used case analysis from ethics consultations to understand the prevalence of the problem and the moral distress experienced by interdisciplinary staff who find themselves in the position of anticipating the provision of CPR at the insistence of surrogates when clinicians believed it was not medically indicated. Having gathered this information, the next step was to develop a more robust understanding of "community" perception of the problem and to engage community members in thoughtful reflection on the issue. Carol Powers will present the background of the Harvard Community Ethics Committee and discuss the process they used to address this charged issue, including the evolution of the language used to describe this issue (e.g. is it best described as "unilateral DNR" or "non-therapeutic CPR"?), and describe the conclusions this group reached and the report they submitted. Martha Jurchak will then present on how one institution used the report with its Ethics Committee and Ethics Consultation Service, what policy was developed, and how the greater institutional community was educated on the issue.

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

Yes No