



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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

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Proposed title of paper: Euthanasia: Indian Physicians' perceptions

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Objectives:

1. To what extent are practising physicians attached to tertiary care centre aware of euthanasia?
2. Are physicians open for performing euthanasia, under different circumstances?
3. Do physicians from different religious backgrounds feel differently about euthanasia?

Method:

35 practising doctors were asked to respond to an anonymous ten-item questionnaire with Likert-type responses. Five refused to participate. The questionnaire was based on a case scenario involving a 72-year, mentally competent, terminally-ill patient, suffering from incurable pain due to metastases from a prostatic cancer.

Results:

21 doctors were Hindus and 9 were Muslims. None of the participants had done or assisted an act of euthanasia, though all were aware of what it is. More than half had never been requested to perform euthanasia. When confronted with a hypothetical case scenario, 9 out of 30 were willing to comply with a request for active euthanasia. When the scenario was changed, with the same patient not giving explicit permission, only 2 physicians were still willing. 12 physicians (40%) were willing to comply with

just withdrawal of life support. In a non-terminal situation, only one physician was still agreeable to comply with the family's request for withdrawal of life support. If the patient was several years younger, the distribution was similar to the previous situation. If the patient was a child, 2 physicians were willing to comply with the request. Among the Hindu physicians 38% were willing to perform active voluntary euthanasia and 28.5% passive euthanasia, as against only 11% each among Muslim physicians.

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 paper?

Yes No