



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: "When it is Hard not to Judge: Two Cases studies on the importance of non-judgmental regard in Challenging Circumstances"

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

The principle of non-judgmental regard, developed by Rosamond Rhodes, is both an attitude towards patients and a constraint on physicians' actions. It involves providing care without the interference of judgments about the patient's moral merit, attractiveness or affability.

Our first goal is to present and analyze two cases in which physicians fail to uphold non-judgmental regard. Such cases often arise in settings in which patients are low income, recipients of government assistance, immigrants or non-fluent English speakers; or are engaging in risky sexual activity or substance abuse. In the cases we consider, the physicians make judgments about what kind of information the patient should be privy to about their diagnosis, prognosis and treatment options. They are also dismissive of their patients' concerns and goals for treatment. Our paper will explore the causes of these judgments and attitudes and frame the discussion in light of Rhodes' principle of non-judgmental regard.

Our second goal is to argue for the importance of applying the principle of non-judgmental regard in challenging contexts. We argue that failures of non-judgmental regard often involve the misapplication

of the following two principles: 1) Paternalism; a physician makes assumptions about the patient's abilities or future behavior. The physician might also make assumptions about "the patient's good." 2) Justice and the fair distribution of resources; the physician makes a decision about what the patient deserves. This judgment of desert is based on factors that the physician is sensitive to, for example, sexual history. Our third goal is to offer suggestions for clinical practice.

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

N/A

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

Yes No