Frankfurt Network
Ethics in geriatric care
Practical experience and theoretical considerations from seven years of projekt work

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Overview
1. The starting point
2. The history of the project
3. Facts and statistics
4. Theoretical deductions
5. Perspectives

ICCEC: Frankfurter Netzwerk Ethik in der Altenpflege
Interdisciplinary study by Bockenheimer-Lucius, G.; Pantel J. et al.
“Psychopharmaceutics supply in senior living homes with long-term care” (2004/2005)

→ Result I: The use of pharmaceutics in long-term care facilities is often inadequate
→ Result II: There is no discursive space to reflect and discuss ethical problems of everyday practice

→ Consequence of result II: Founding of an “ethics project” for the Frankfurt nursing homes for the elderly

Chronological outline of the project
Phase one: 2006-2007
Phase two: 2007-2008
Phase three: 2008-2013
Phase one: The first ethics committee (2006-2007)

- Founding of the first ethics committee in the „Franziska Schervier Altenpflegeheim“ Frankfurt
- According to the pattern of a clinical ethics committee (interdisciplinarity)
- Responsibility for 190 residents in two facilities
- Tasks: further education in ethical topics, ethics consultation, development of „guidelines“


- Establishing the discussion forum
- Low level offer to the employees of the senior living homes
- Discursive space to reflect the every-day practice and its normative implications
- Intended as a supplementary measure to the ethics committee
- The ethics café has become an essential element of the network structure

Phase three: The second ethics committee (2008-2013)

- Founding of the second ethics committee in analogy to the first one
- It has no permanent location but rotates among the participating nursing homes within Frankfurt
- It is constituted by employees of the Frankfurt nursing homes
- It is responsible for approx. 3800 residents in 38 facilities

The network structure

- The benefit of the network structure
  - It saves financial and personal resources
  - It enables communication between employees of different facilities
  - It facilitates training of the care staff and quality control of the committee work

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Ethics committees

- The first ethics committee: 78 meetings were held (since 2006) and 34 „case discussions“ has been performed
- The second ethics committee: 55 meetings were held (since 2008) and 9 „case discussions“ has been performed
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Additional topics
- In addition to the case discussions a certain number of topics have been discussed
  - Artificial nutrition and PEG-tube
  - Living will and custody law
  - Handling of "challenging" residents
  - Ethical questions of biography work
  - Changes of social structure in nursing homes

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Ethics consultation (2008-2014)
Ethics consultation / ethical case consulting is a discursive procedure to solve ethically relevant decision-making conflicts.
- 31 consultations have been performed on demand

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Ethics café (since 2007)
- The ethics café: 74 sessions of the ethics café took place (average number of participants: approx. 10)
- 48 "case discussions" have been performed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>meetings</th>
<th>case discussions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EKA I</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics café</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>EKA II</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics consultation total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>122</td>
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Further education in medical and nursing ethics (since 2007)
- 17 public events for the employees of the Frankfurt nursing homes (average number of participants: ca. 45)
- 14 events for committee members to enable the committee work

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Development of Guidelines / Statements
- Questionnaire on the assessment of ability to consent in "everyday questions" in the Senior Living Homes
- Guideline for the handling of Living wills
- Guideline for the handling of "challenging" persons
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**Theoretical deductions:** Differences between nursing home and hospital
- the range of the discussed cases
- the setting of the ethics consultation
Consequently
→ it is to be reconstructed theoretically in a different way and
→ it needs a specific procedure for ethics consultation

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**Theoretical reconstruction**
→ The specific normative questions of nursing homes emerge out of the field of tension between privacy and institutional care
Theoretical reference point: total institution (Goffman)

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**Specific procedure for ethics consultation**
→ Usual procedures are inappropriate
- often very complex
- strongly oriented to medical aspects
- Lacking aspects of privacy and lifestyle
→ Procedure of ethics consultation for geriatric care
- Simple structure
- Privacy and lifestyle as major question

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**Interdisciplinary study “Psychopharmaceutics supply in Senior Living Homes with long-term care”**
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Phase four (2014)
Reorganisation of the organisational framework

→ Delegation of „ethics commissioner”
→ Further education of the commissioners to „ethics consultants” in accordance to the standards of the „Akademie für Ethik in der Medizin”
→ More organisational and financial responsibility of the care facilities

International Conference on Clinical Ethics and Consultation

The experiences of the project work led to the publication:
Bockenheimer-Lucius / Dansou / Sauer
Das Ethikkomitee im Altenpflegeheim. Theoretische Grundlagen und praktische Konzeption, Frankfurt am Main 2012

Thank you very much!
www.ethiknetzwerkaltenpflege.de

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Gwendolin Wanderer

Nursing ethics (professional area nursing)

Medical ethics (professional area medicine)

Geriatric care ethics (professional area geriatric care)