



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

May 11-14, 2010 ♦ Portland Art Museum ♦ Portland, Oregon, USA

www.ethics2010.org



Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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

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Proposed title of paper: Interpreting the Medical Validity of Religious Beliefs

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Following Gregory L. Bock's innovative bioethical framework that seeks to determine the medical validity of religious beliefs by requiring that they (i) be deeply held; (ii) be shared by a community; (iii) cause no harm; and (iv) pass the test of a religious interpreter, this paper articulates further how hospital chaplains function effectively as "religious interpreters." Using a recent notorious case in Canada in which a family's demands for life-sustaining treatment based on religious beliefs were pitted against a physician's refusal to provide "inappropriate" care, this paper argues that the chaplain as interpreter of religious beliefs and values requires a full vision of the chaplain's unique and complex role in healthcare that (a) regards the patient not the chaplain as the "expert," (b) utilizes a variety of key images of pastoral care, and (c) engages a creative hermeneutical methodology that bears upon the art of clinical ethics consultation itself. It concludes that in its broadest understanding and fullest appreciation beyond judgmental interpretation of facts alone, hospital chaplaincy can provide a helpful resource to healthcare teams and an influential model in the art of ethics consultation that embraces uncertainty to build trust among stakeholders. OBJECTIVES: (1) to present difficulties in interpreting the depth of religious beliefs, community consensus, and the various aspects of harm; (2) to advocate chaplaincy best practice as a useful model for ethics consultation; (3) to promote professionally trained, board certified hospital chaplains as effective colleagues in the creative art of interdisciplinary ethics consultations.

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

BOCK, Gregory Lawrence. (2008). "Medically Valid Religious Beliefs." Journal of Medical Ethics 34(6): 437-440.

MUNDLE, Robert. (2009). "The Hospital Chaplain as Religious Interpreter in Bioethical Dilemmas."
Scottish Journal of Healthcare Chaplaincy, Oct.; Vol 12:2 (In press).

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

Yes No