



6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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Proposed title of paper: Ethical Dilemmas Encountered, Clinicians' Views of the Ethics Committee and Barriers to Ethics Consultation in a Tertiary Care Pediatric Hospital

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Background: Ethics consultation services have existed for over thirty years, yet most healthcare providers do not access these services.

Objective: To describe barriers to ethics consultation, knowledge of the ethics services provided, and usefulness of these services in a tertiary care children's hospital.

Methods: A qualitative study utilizing key healthcare provider interviews within Children's Mercy Hospital (CMH). Four investigators performed semi-structured interviews using a discussion guide; each interview session was recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were analyzed for recurring themes.

Results: Forty healthcare providers were asked to participate; twenty-two completed the interview process. Participants represented multiple units within the hospital and included section chiefs, nurse managers, chaplains, child life and social work. The frequency of encountering ethical issues in daily practice ranged from infrequent to very often. Most resolved these issues by discussions with colleagues and/or with the patient/family. Most had never obtained an ethics consultation. Reported barriers to ethics consultation included 1) worry about upsetting other involved providers or the family, 2) lack of understanding how to access services, 3) lack of knowledge of services an ethics consultation could provide and 4) how these services could be helpful. Respondents who had utilized ethics services in the past found them useful. Most felt increased education would help overcome barriers.

Conclusion: Barriers to the utilization of ethics consultation services still exist; most stem from poor understanding of the role of ethics consultation in patient care. Increasing ethics education hospital-wide may help remove these barriers and was favored by most participants.

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

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Yes No