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Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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Proposed title of paper: EVALUATION OF A FIRST INDIVIDUAL CLINICAL ETHICS CONSULTATION SYSTEM IN A CHILEAN ADULT ICU

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

At Clínica Alemana in Santiago, 4 to 5 cases per year are consulted to the ethics committee. To make it more available, an individual consultation system was established in 2008. This study reports the ethical problems identified in consults, and the ICU physician's evaluation of the system.

Method: All consultation records were independently analyzed to identify their main ethical problems. ICU medical staff's evaluation of consultations was done through an anonymous questionnaire.

Results: The consultation system works as a formal consult mainly required by the ICU staff, and reports to the ethics committee. 50 consultations were done in the ICU during a 10 month period. The patients' age was 80 or more years in 54% of them. Main diagnoses were neurologic, oncologic or cardiopulmonary problems. The ethical problems identified were treatment limitation (62%), proportionality or futility (42%), need of peaceful death (36%), lack of anticipated decisions (28%), disagreement between physicians and patient's family (24%), undefined subrogation (14%), and abuse of public resources (14%).

27 of 31 ICU physicians answered the questionnaire, using a 1 (min) to 7 (max.) scale. They found that consultation is helpful for decision making (6.3), useful for improving ethical perception (6.0), supportive for staff (6.5), good for patients (6.3), supportive for families (6.7), and timely performed (5.2).

Conclusions: As a complement for the ethics committee's work, consultation was frequently used. It motivated the staff in ethical issues, it was considered supportive for both physicians and families, and an improvement of decision making in ICU.

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

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

Yes No