



## 6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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

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### Abstract Submission Form

Please contact John Tuohey at [ethics@providence.org](mailto:ethics@providence.org) with any questions.

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Proposed title of paper: Continuously Improving Ethics Consultation Services in VHA Facilities (2007-08)

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Ethics consultation services (ECS) generally have not adopted quality improvement principles and systems thinking to ensure the provision of quality services. This has contributed to quality gaps including lack of standardization in the approach to ethics consultation, and limited integration and impact on health care institutions. We developed the IntegratedEthics Facility Workbook to help facilities critically reflect on their ethics program annually in terms of being comprehensive, systematic, broadly deployed, and well integrated; and to develop plans for improvement.

In 2008, 127 of 137 VHA facilities completed their first workbook assessment. ECS question topics included the approach to providing ethics consultation, policy elements, consultant education, accountability, accessibility, evaluation strategies, etc. For example, one question asked facilities to best describe ECS availability. Response options were: no regular hours, available by special request; available during normal work hours; available during normal work hours with variable availability at other times; and available 24/7. Another question asked facilities to describe how they assess their ethics consultants' knowledge and skills. Response options included not assessing ethics consultants' knowledge and skills, assessing this only if someone questions their proficiency or suggests there is a problem, assessing without explicit standards, and assessing knowledge and skills through a systematic process and against explicit standards.

The presentation will present workbook results and strategies implemented to address the identified opportunities for improvement.

Objectives:

1. To describe the workbook tool for improving ECS.
2. To identify ECS strengths and opportunities for improvement.
3. To describe strategies implemented to improve ECS quality.

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