



## 6th International Conference on Clinical Ethics Consultation

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[www.ethics2010.org](http://www.ethics2010.org)



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### Abstract Submission Form – Papers

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

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Proposed title of paper: Hospital Discharges Against Medical Advice – How to Understand and Manage These Ethical Dilemmas

Abstract with 3 clearly stated objectives in 250 words:

Ethicists are often called to consult on discharges against medical advice (AMA), when a patient chooses to leave the hospital before the recommendation of their treating physician. Working to ensure that patients make informed decisions, while also helping clinical teams to understand and respect the autonomous decisions of patients is a challenging task for the ethics consultant. Unfortunately, ethically justifiable options may not always reflect the underlying issue driving the conflict. Consultants can better focus the dilemma for the treating team if they understand recent research findings in doctor-patient communication skills, as well as substance abuse management and the known risks and benefits of AMA discharges.

To help consultants who assist with these dilemmas, the presentation will review the empirical data on the background, management and prevention of AMA discharges in medical inpatients. Drawing from this evidence base, the presentation will review the medical risks, prevalence and clinical predictors of AMA discharges and include practical advice and recommendations for working with the patient, family, and clinician in ensuring an ethically justifiable outcome. The following relevant topics will also be addressed: challenges in treatment refusal; psychologic factors that can impair decision making; and the contribution of co-morbid substance abuse to the ethical dilemma.

Objectives:

1. The participant will understand the prevalence and risk factors for AMA discharges
2. The participant will appreciate the interventions for managing and preventing AMA discharges

3. The participant will appreciate how to effectively involve the treatment team in managing these dilemmas

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

Alfandre D. "I'm Going Home!" Discharges Against Medical Advice. Mayo Clin Proc. March 2009; 84(3):255-260

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

Yes     No