

PRACTICAL BIOETHICS

Coronavirus Raises Stakes for Health Ethics

From the mid-1980s when ventilators came into common use, the Center for Practical Bioethics has helped patients, families, providers and policymakers make decisions about what ought to be done given what can be done.

Supported by the community, we've applied ethical analysis to help distraught parents decide whether to remove their child's life support after an accident. To help clinicians untangle treatment options when incapacitated patients had no one else to speak for them. To help officials consider the consequences of proposed policies.

Public Health Ethics

The coronavirus pandemic hasn't changed the work of clinical ethics. But it has raised the stakes. In normal times, clinical ethics emphasize providers' duty to focus on the needs of the individual patient. In pandemic times, public health ethics, which emphasize justice and the common good, take precedence. Public health ethics ask: How to provide the most benefit to the most people? For example:

- How to implement **Crisis Standards of Care**, which providers adopt when a public health event substantially impacts operations and normal standards cannot be maintained.
- How to provide nursing homes the evidence-based **Advance Care Planning** tools needed to discuss treatment preferences with residents and families, as well as guidance for end-of-life conversations when loved ones cannot be present at the bedside.
- How to help clinicians on the front lines needing help to cope with the **Moral Distress** they feel when asked to provide care that differs from what they perceive as ethically correct.

Mission Forward

By early March, we knew that CPB's mission – to raise and respond to ethical issues in health and healthcare – meant providing ethical guidance through the pandemic.

- Develop, curate and disseminate practical pandemic resources that policymakers and healthcare providers need to apply ethical principles to patient care in real time.

*Lorraine Duncan, MD
Centerpoint Medical Center
Emergency Medicine Specialist,
Ethics Committee Chair and
2020 Ethics Champion
on duty in her PPE*



- Work with local, regional and national leaders to ensure that ethical principles are embedded in plans to adequately test, trace and support individuals of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds whose lives and families are impacted by COVID-19.
- Respond to urgent requests from providers and families for consultations on ethically complex cases.



Watch the Video! **PRACTICAL BIOETHICS** *in the TIME of COVID*

As COVID-19 continues its relentless march across our cities, country and world, practical ethics guidance is more important than ever.

This video, produced by Curious Eye Productions, tells our story with a focus on professional and lay ethics committee volunteers who provide ethics support and how CPB is using technology to bolster those efforts.

Watch it at PracticalBioethics.org/about-us/overview.

Erika Blacksher Named John B. Francis Chair in Bioethics Tackling Issues Around Class, Race and Health in America



The Center named Erika Blacksher, PhD, as the fourth John B. Francis Chair in Bioethics. Dr. Blacksher formally assumed her position on September 1, 2020. She succeeds Richard Payne, MD, who worked tirelessly throughout his career to eliminate racial disparities in end-of-life care and chronic pain.

Dr. Payne died unexpectedly in 2019 having served as the Francis Chair for six years.

Population Health

“Dr. Blacksher is an incredible population health scholar and bioethics researcher, whose contributions to the broader field of healthcare are critically important in this time of global health crisis,” said John G. Carney, CPB President and CEO.

“She is a pioneer in the emerging field of population health ethics and has developed her skills and scholarship through the authentic lived experience of those she seeks to serve.”

Return to Kansas City

Dr. Blacksher is leaving her faculty position at the Department of Bioethics and Humanities at the University Washington School of Medicine where she has spent the last decade writing, teaching and researching. Her current research examines ethics issues raised by health inequalities, population health policies and how to engage populations burdened by health disparities.

She and her husband Tom Knittel, an architect, have family and friends in Kansas City, where from 1998 to 2001 she served as deputy director of CPB’s Community-State Partnership Initiative to Improve End-of-Life Care.

26th Annual Flanigan Lecture *A Letter to My People: Whiteness Amidst a Racial Reckoning in America*

The 2020 Flanigan Lecture, presented by incoming John B. Francis Chair, Erika Blacksher, PhD, on August 17, was the Center’s first large-scale virtual event with more than 700 people registered.

Dr. Blacksher explored the concept of “whiteness,” its intersection with social class, and its role in shaping people’s lives and health prospects. Drawing on her own life story

as a first-generation high school graduate, she connected her journey to ideas about whiteness that we need to begin to understand and explore. The Center worked with Bobby Keys Media, Inc. to produce the lecture.

Watch the lecture at:
[facebook.com/
practicalbioethics/videos](https://facebook.com/practicalbioethics/videos)



Ronn Huff: HCA Ethics Champion Welcomes Partnership



Ronn Huff was a tennis pro director at a park facility in Nashville working on his master’s degree in religious studies. Now, 15 years later, he’s the Director of HCA Healthcare’s Center for Clinical Ethics.

After grad school, Ronn joined HCA as a clinical ethics consultant and part-time educator for Nashville area HCA hospitals. In 2016, recognizing the need for expanded system-wide education and quality assurance, HCA named Ronn as director of its new clinical ethics department, responsible for ongoing clinical ethics committee education across the healthcare system’s more than 180 hospitals.

Supporting Clinical Ethics

“Clinical ethics has a crucial role in hospitals,” said Ronn. “But it’s almost entirely composed of volunteers who may not have much ethics training and are being asked to consult on complex cases. We felt they needed more support.”

Ronn welcomes providing that support with resources from the Center for Practical Bioethics.

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ETHICS CHAMPIONS 2020

Providers Name Their Institutions' Leaders

Due to COVID-19, our 2020 Annual Dinner on April 21 didn't happen. Nevertheless, we remain firmly committed to one of the event's primary goals: To honor ethics champions.

Who are these champions? They are the 23 professional and lay ethics committee volunteers nominated this year by healthcare providers and systems throughout the Kansas City region who help their institutions resolve ethically complex situations.

Cathy Boutte	Overland Park Regional Medical Center, HCA Midwest Health
Kathy Davis	University of Kansas Medical Center – Pediatrics
Lorraine Duncan	Centerpoint Medical Center, HCA Midwest Health
Brandy Ficek	Stormont Vail
Kara Hess	AdventHealth Shawnee Mission
Sarah Hon	North Kansas City Hospital
Ronn Huff	HCA Healthcare, Brentwood, TN
Edwin T. Kraemer	Truman Medical Center, Lakewood
Carmen Lile-Henley	Liberty Hospital
Leslie McGrew-Kaufman	Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care
Laura Miller-Smith	Children's Mercy Hospital – Hospital Hill
Sarah Oland	Midwest Transplant Network
Lisa A. Osgood	Truman Medical Center, Health Sciences District
Bethany Ruhl	Saint Luke's Health System – Crittenton
Nancy Schroeder	VNA Visiting Nurse Association
Sally Schwab	Mosaic Life Care – St. Joseph
Karlie Speicher	Saint Luke's Health System – Plaza
Noreen Thompson	University of Kansas Medical Center
Jennifer Tieman	Research Medical Center, HCA Midwest Health
Kimberly Williams	Phelps Health, Rolla, MO
Jerry Wilmes	Mosaic Life Care – Maryville
Cathy Wisor	Saint Luke's Health System – North
Julia Woods	Saint Luke's Health System – South



You can read stories about many of these smart, generous people at PracticalBioethics.org/ethics-champions.

Ronn Huff: HCA Ethics Champion Welcomes Partnership Continued

"Learning that Ryan Pferdehirt [Director of Membership and Ethics Education] is available to assist with ethics committee training and policy development is a blessing to me," he said. "Good clinical ethics committees don't happen by accident or by just assembling smart people in a room. Planning and practice are incredibly important.

"I especially applaud the Center's work," he continued, "in developing an industry standard for advance directives. Thoughtfully designed directives are crucial because they touch so many people, and I haven't seen any resources that are better."

Improving Advance Directives

The coronavirus pandemic has intensified Ronn's focus on improving advance directives.

"We haven't moved the needle on completing advance directives in decades," he said. "The coronavirus underscores the importance of identifying surrogates and having conversations earlier."

Ronn is excited about working with the Center to improve advance directives by adding more nuanced language that clarifies when and how they apply.

Linda Doolin Ward Retires

When Linda Ward shuts down her computer on October 31, 2020, she will mark the official end of a 50-year career that began as a teacher and ended after more than 16 years as Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer of the Center for Practical Bioethics. Prior to joining CPB's staff, she served three years on the Board of Directors.

In addition to responsibilities in finance, planning, governance and resource development, Linda pioneered and expanded corporate and community-based Advance Care Planning education, which she will continue to offer on a consulting basis. The recipient of numerous awards for volunteer service and civic leadership, Linda looks forward to continued commitment to the causes she has championed throughout her life, along with extra time to spend with family.

"No one in the Center's history has devoted as much time and energy from both a board and staff perspective to the success of the Center's vision as Linda," said John Carney, President and CEO. "We are not just lucky for having worked with her, we are all better people for having done so."



SHORT TAKES

Donate Monthly

As a monthly donor, you will be welcomed into the Practical Bioethics **Sustainers Council**, becoming someone we can count on to infuse ethics into health and healthcare.

It's easy to sign up now at PracticalBioethics.org/give-monthly.

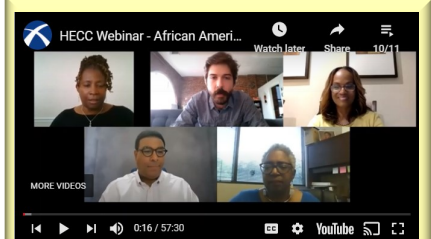
Pain Policy Congress

The Center partner was represented in the newly formed grant-funded initiative, Alliance to Advance Comprehensive Pain Management (AACIPM), which held its first online symposium on May 13-14. Nearly 500 participating individuals representing stakeholder interests came together to unify and align around their shared goal to increase access to comprehensive integrative pain management. CPB's Cindy Leyland with PAINS-KC Citizen Leaders Angel and Kalind Perry presented *Changing the Conversation: Moving from What's the Matter **With** You to What Matters **To** You*, which highlighted the lived experiences of patients.

Advance Care Planning Workshops

Now that nearly everyone knows how to Zoom, we can help you organize a virtual Advance Care Planning workshop for your employees or community group. We'll explain what Advance Care Planning is, why it's important, and how to go about it in your state.

Contact the Center to find out more at 816-221-1100 or mdelles@PracticalBioethics.org. Download your free copy of CPB's *Caring Conversations*® workbook, including forms you can fill out online. (NOTE: Many states require notarization.)



Pandemic Resources

Since March, CPB has released nearly 50 free webinars and updates to a growing subscriber base. These are the top 8 based on attendance:

- Ethics in a Pandemic
- Moral Distress and COVID-19
- COVID-19, Shared Decision Making and Advance Care Planning, Part 1 Ethical Dimensions of Quarantine and Isolation
- Duties to Care in a Pandemic
- COVID-19, Shared Decision Making and Advance Care Planning, Part 2 Understanding Crisis Standards of Care
- Implementing Crisis Standards of Care
- Ethical Obligations in Reopening Communities
- African American Religious Perspectives on COVID-19

View them all at PracticalBioethics.org/resources/pandemic-resources.



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