



Center For Practical BIOETHICS

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Living Our Values in Challenging Times A Message from Our CEO

In his role as President and CEO of the Center, Dr. James Stowe is uncovering a granite resolve to stay upright against the headwinds of challenging times.

In these personal remarks, Dr. Stowe delves into the ways that the Center lives its values.

Our Core Values



[READ](#)

Algorithms Raise Ethical Issues Four Case Studies

Recognizing and understanding the risks of AI in healthcare be hard for the average “person in the street.” Even many of the people developing, selecting and deploying these technologies may not fully comprehend how the algorithms they create make decisions.

[Read](#) case examples illustrating ethical issues that AI can raise:

- An algorithm that has been shown likely to incorrectly predict a lower mortality risk for patients with



asthma who present with pneumonia.

READ

- An algorithm that doesn't differentiate between historical ordering and testing patterns in rural versus academic facilities.
- An algorithm's use of historical cost-to-treat data that systematically underrates the risk of black patients with high-risk medical conditions.
- Concerns about how health data is collected, stored and used leading patients to decline to provide information important to their treatment and future accuracy of algorithms.

The Center offers services to help healthcare organizations design infrastructures of accountability with standard processes to help make AI technologies safer and less susceptible to bias.

LEARN ABOUT ETHICAL
AI

CPB Welcomes Abby Gast-Watterson

New Team Member

Abby Gast-Watterson joined the Center as Development and Events Coordinator last month and is already hard at work planning a September event (watch your email!) and getting to know you – our friends and supporters.

Abby grew up in Lee's Summit, Missouri, and attended Pepperdine University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in music and later her master's degree in choral conducting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She worked with a children's choir in Colorado before returning to the Kansas City area in July of 2024.



Prior to joining CPB, Abby was the Volunteer Coordinator at Growing Futures Early Education Center, which provides early education opportunities and family support services for children in Johnson County, Kansas. She loves to bake, embroider, and snuggle with her mechanic husband, Nick, and their two cats, Checkers and Chessica.

Four Words She Uses All the Time

Supporter Profile of Barbara Bollier, MD

Autonomy. Justice. Non-maleficence.
Beneficence.

“I use those four basic principles of bioethics all the time!” said Barbara Bollier, a retired anesthesiologist, former Kansas State Senator, and longtime Center for Practical Bioethics volunteer and Legacy Society member.

Barabara led the Center’s Pediatric Palliative Care Initiative in the early 2000s. As a state senator, the Center was her go-to source for help in evaluating complex health bills.

Retirement in Tabernash, Colorado, hasn’t lessened Barbara and husband Rene’s support for the Center or their strong belief in its mission and values.



READ

Clinical Ethics Resources

You can use these free resources to educate your ethics committee and increase anyone’s ability to respond to complex ethical issues.

Ethics Dispatch

Beneficence, Soft Power and Moral Authority

The election of Pope Leo XIV prompted Cassie Shaffer Johnson, Ethics Services Program Coordinator, to consider his predecessor Pope Francis’s influence on the world as a model of beneficence and soft power.

Ryan Pferdehirt, Vice President of Ethics Services, explores the significance of soft power from his personal perspective as a professional ethicist. “This kind of responsibility is heavy, and ethicists must be vigilant in using their influence for moral good,” he says.



READ THE DISPATCH

Clinical Ethics Corner Video Case Study

Connecting on a Personal Level:

Questions That Change the Conversation

Medical ethics work carries enormous responsibilities, mainly through the idea of *moral authority*. “In my experience, it is always best to prioritize compassion, humility and empathy over everything else,” says Ryan Pferdehirt, D.Bioethics, HEC-C, our VP of Bioethics.

Ryan had a patient in her early 80s. She was unresponsive and dying of breast cancer.



WATCH THE SHORT

She had lost the ability to swallow and was no longer able to take food orally. Her son believed she should have a feeding tube, a PEG tube, surgically placed. The daughter disagreed. Ryan was asked to assist as an ethicist.

VIDEO

READ THE CASE

Read why Ryan believes his ability to connect with people on a personal level was key to resolving this and many other clinical situations—more so than his knowledge of philosophy, ethics or rational argument.

Ethics Committee Consortium News

June 3 Noon CT: An Open Discussion about TA-NRP-DCD

Ethics Committee members in healthcare organizations that partner with the Center for Ethics Services are invited to join the 2nd virtual meeting of the CPB Ethics Committee Consortium on **Tuesday, June 3, at 12:00 p.m. CDT.**

This session will focus on **TA-NRP-DCD**, with open discussion around the ethical considerations, logistical challenges, and institutional concerns related to implementing this procedure. TA-NRP (Thoracoabdominal Normothermic Regional Perfusion) is a technique used in organ donation after circulatory determination of death (DCD) to improve organ recovery.

We'll explore key concepts, policy recommendations and impactful case examples.

We welcome agenda items! If you have something to contribute, please reach out to Ryan (rpferdehirt@practicalbioethics.org) or Cassie (cshafferjohnson@practicalbioethics.org) ahead of time.

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