

Ethics Representatives Meeting
May 3, 2007 - Red Deer AB

Ethics Activities Across the Province

Ethics Activities Across the Province – Education

- Ethics workshops
- Discussion and information sessions
- Development of online resources, discussion forums, and podcasts
- Promotion of PHEN Introduction to Bioethics Course and Annual Conference
- Presentations and displays during Bioethics Week

Ethics Activities Across the Province – Education

- Ethics Grand Rounds during Bioethics Week
- Education sessions twice a month, some using telehealth

Ethics Activities Across the Province – Ethics Committees

- Increasing numbers of ethics committees
- Committees addressing education, policy, and practice issues as well as clinical questions
- Varying rates of consults - from 1/month to 2-5/week
- Trust in the ethics committee is growing, as evidenced by increasingly complex requests

Ethics Activities Across the Province – Personnel

- Have a resident in clinical ethics
- Employing full-time ethics coordinators

Ethics Activities Across the Province – Other

- Developing policies - DNR, tube feeding, informing long term care patients regarding MRSA in the facility
- Expanding work with front line clinicians experiencing moral distress or involved with difficult decisions
- Participation on committees looking at organ donation and disclosure after medical error

Most Successful Ethics Initiatives

Most Successful Ethics Initiatives - Education

- End of Life Matters! - Workshop
 - Speaker was a major attraction
- Teaching days for CHA committee members
- Revitalization of regional council
 - Strong attendance at lunchtime telehealth sessions

Most Successful Ethics Initiatives – Ethics Committees

- Development of an operational plan outlining goals and strategies
 - Keeps committee focused and on target
- Finalizing a regional NTBR policy
 - Success due in part to having all players working on a solution
- Creation of a provincial clinical ethics committee

Most Successful Ethics Initiatives – Ethics Committees

- Organization of a new Mental Health Ethics Committee
- Heightened awareness of the ethics committee
 - Committee members traveled to promote the committee and a variety of educational and discussion initiatives
- Reorganizing committee into three groups (consultation, policy review, and education)
 - Based on input from members

Most Successful Ethics Initiatives – Education for Ethics Committees

- Ongoing education for committee members
- Participation in video sharing circle
- Post-consultation role playing and facilitation
 - All members learn from consultation and become more adept at facilitation
- Members make presentations to committee
 - Capitalizes on strengths of individual members

What Challenges Do We Face?

**What Challenges Do We Face?
- Personnel**

- Lack of a dedicated Ethics Coordinator
- Huge numbers of staff (14,000) and physicians (2100) all of whom are busy
- Getting staff to identify ethical issues and accessing resources to assist in dealing with ethical issues
- No local ethics expert

**What Challenges Do We Face?
– Ethics Committees**

- Availability of committee participants
- Turnover of committee members
- Minimal physician involvement
- Having a presence in all sites across a geographically large region
- Evaluation of effectiveness of consultations
- Keeping the committee “alive” in the face of other internal/external priority pressure

What Challenges Do We Face?

– Organizational Issues

- Getting ethics included in all decision making
- Eliciting support from around the organization for the growth of clinical ethics as a health profession
- Need for resources if clinical ethics is to grow
- Convincing administration that ethics is more than just the committee required by CCHSA
- Inclusion and participation of all units at the site
- Working within a political system

Thanks!

- The following organizations shared their experiences:
 - Alberta Cancer Board
 - Alberta Catholic Health Corporation
 - Alberta Health and Wellness
 - Calgary Health Region
 - Cross Cancer Centre
 - David Thompson Health Region
 - East Central Health
 - Peace Country Health Region
 - Royal Alexandra Hospital
 - University of Alberta/Stollery Hospitals
