CENTER FOR BIOETHICS
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

Harvard Ethics Consultation Skills Course
Session 1 – Pre-Consult – 4-7 pm, May 30, 2024

Session 1 Objectives

1. Understand and describe the role of the ethics consultant.
2. Clarify and formulate the ethics question.
3. Plan and strategize the ethics consultation.

Session 1 Agenda and Content

4:00-4:30 pm – Clinical Ethics Consultation and the Ethics Consultant
   a) What is and is not the role of an ethics consultant
   b) Common misconceptions for an ethics consultation

4:30-4:50 pm – Breakout session: small groups exploring how to describe to stakeholders the role of an ethics consultant and the purpose of the ethics consultation

4:50-5:00 pm – Break

5:00-5:20 pm – The Ethics Question
   a) Clarifying the ethics question
   b) Identify what is and is not an appropriate ethics question

5:20-5:45 pm – Breakout session: practicing writing an ethics question individually and then, in small groups, discussing pros and cons of proposed questions

5:45-6:00 pm – Plan and strategize the meeting for consultation
   a) Determine urgency
   b) Identify stakeholders to include
   c) Determine meeting format
   d) Assemble resources
   e) Breakout session

6:00-6:10 pm – Break

6:10-6:45 pm – Breakout session: small group role-playing activity to practice performing ethics consultation intake (introducing yourself and your role, requesting necessary intake information, clarifying the ethics question, laying out the ethics consultation plan/strategy)

6:45-7:00 pm – Session wrap-up and debrief

Harvard Ethics Consultation Skills Course
Session 2 – Consult – 4-7 pm, June 6, 2024

Session 2 Objectives

1. Apply basic ethical assessment and analysis skills to an ethical conflict
2. Demonstrate the essential process components involved in facilitating an ethics consultation (including the introduction, mediation, and wrap up)
3. Recognize signs of conflict and apply core conflict resolution techniques within the ethics consultation meeting
4. Identify common pearls and pitfalls of facilitating an ethics consultation meeting

Session 2 Agenda and Content

4:00-4:15 pm – Introducing the meeting

a) Beginning the meeting (including practical considerations regarding room setup, introductions, and introducing the meeting purpose and structure)
b) The role of ethicists in meeting facilitation and strategies for organizing and leading a successful meeting.

4:15-4:30 pm – Breakout session: practicing your introduction in pairs and giving each other constructive feedback on those introductions

4:30-5:15 pm – During the meeting

a) Diagnostic listening, ADEPT, ladder of inference, techniques for effective dialogue
b) Barriers to effective dialogue, and techniques to overcome these
c) Ground rules – should they be used?

5:15-6:15 pm – Breakout session: role-playing in small groups facilitated by course faculty to practice different roles in an ethics consult meeting (switch roles multiple times to give all group members the opportunity to experience different roles/perspectives)

6:15-6:20 pm – Break

6:20-6:30 pm – Concluding the meeting

a) How to "wrap up" and summarize the meeting
b) Clarify final ethics question
c) The ethicist's role and responsibilities once a meeting concludes (including summarizing the positions of all stakeholders, clarifying the ethics question, follow-up)

6:30-6:50 pm – Breakout session: practicing concluding the meeting and offering "next steps" in small groups

6:50-7:00 pm – Session wrap-up

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Harvard Ethics Consultation Skills Course
Session 3 – Post-Consult – 4-7 pm, June 13, 2024

Session 3 Objectives

1. Identify and apply (at least) two frameworks for ethical analysis in consultation.
2. Develop a practice model for documentation.
3. Prepare a strategy to communicate recommendations.

Session 3 Agenda and Content

4:00-4:25 pm – Performing an ethical analysis
a) What methods to use?
b) How best to analyze (various means of ethical analysis)?

4:25-4:50 pm – Breakout session: explore in small groups potential means of analyzing an illustrative ethics case, discussing challenges and potential best practices

4:50-5:15 pm – Best Practices for Documentation
a) Note template/guideline
b) What is “discoverable”?
c) What and how to share with patients/families?
d) How to identify (or establish) your organizational guidelines, norms, and/or policy?
e) Introduction of consultation data collection and quality assessment/analysis

5:15-5:30 pm – Breakout session: discussion about documentation best practices in large group

5:30-5:35 pm – Break

5:35-5:45 pm – Communicating Recommendations
a) Who should do it: ethics consultant, medical team, someone else?
b) When/how recommendations should be communicated
c) Did we offer advice? How do we distinguish between advice and recommendations?
d) Strategies to acknowledge and diffuse moral distress

5:45-6:15 pm – Breakout session: small groups practicing strategies for communicating recommendations

6:15-6:25 pm – When is the consult considered “complete”?
a) What are the questions issues needed to ask ourselves before the consult is “complete”?
b) How to “tie up loose ends” as a consult comes to an end (including considerations regarding documentation, patient status/disposition, and personal reflection/questioning)
c) What if the clinical team chooses not to follow the ethics recommendations?

6:25-6:45 pm – Breakout session: discussion of best practices/strategies regarding consult completion

6:45-7:00 pm – Session wrap-up and conclusions

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Harvard Ethics Consultation Skills Course
Session 4 – Putting it all together – 8am-6pm, June 21, 2024

8:00-8:30 am – Attendee registration (pick-up nametag and materials, sign up for lunch "special interest group," breakfast, networking (in atrium)

8:30-9:00 am –Welcome session: Introductions and plans for the day (in amphitheater)

9:00-9:15 am – Attendees head to their first room (see handout for group/room assignments)

9:15-9:30 am – Attendees discuss **Case #1** in small groups, plan for questions for stakeholders

9:30-11:00 am – Mock Ethics Consultation **Case #1**: Small group "Ethics teams" interview stakeholders

11:00-11:15 am – Break

11:15 am-12:15 pm – Small group combined debrief and discussion regarding **Case #1**

12:15-12:30 pm – Attendees pick up lunch (in atrium) and go to lunch "special interest group" rooms

12:30-1:20 pm – Lunch in "special interest group" rooms (see registration table for room numbers)

1:30-1:45 pm – Attendees **discuss Case #2** in small groups, plan for questions for stakeholders

1:45-3:15 pm – Mock Ethics Consultation **Case #2**: Small group "Ethics teams" interview stakeholders

3:15-4:15 pm – Small groups combined debrief and discussion regarding **Case #2**

4:15-4:30 pm – Break (with beverages, in atrium)

4:30-5:30 pm – Keynote presentation by Keisha Ray, PhD, followed by Q&A (in amphitheater)

5:30-5:45 pm – Closing remarks (in amphitheater)

5:45-6:45 pm – Closing reception: snacks and refreshments, opportunities to further meet/network with fellow attendees and course faculty (in atrium)