

Controversy and Dialogue about Conscientious Objection in Clinical Care

A half-day conference hosted by
McGill University's Biomedical Ethics Unit and the Institute for
Health and Social Policy

April 14th, 2014, 08:00 to 12:00
Jeanne Timmins Amphitheatre, Montreal Neurological Institute

Late terminations of pregnancy, neonatal resuscitation at the limits of viability, intensive care in patients with profound limitations of consciousness, access to expensive and controversial reproductive technologies, palliative sedation, euthanasia...these are but some of the scenarios that challenge the personal moral commitments of front-line care-givers and health care administrators.

Increasingly, such complex and ethically controversial clinical cases are addressed in a team context. But what happens when a "team decision" represents a violation of someone's core morality? Can the health professional always opt out? Should she actively resist the consensus to reverse the decision? Should she impose her morality onto others when she has the authority to do so? What are the limits of conscientious objection in clinical care?

The goal of this conference is to raise awareness of the controversial aspects of conscientious objection and to engage clinicians in a dialogue on how to approach and manage such challenges.

More details to follow.

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