

Hub and Spokes Strategy: Clinical Bioethics Integration, Sustainability and Accountability

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Purpose



- To foster an ethical climate and strengthen ethics capacity broadly throughout healthcare settings.

"The important point about creating an ethical environment within an organisation is that the proposed structures are multiple, interconnected with one another, and diffused throughout the organisation." (Renz and Eddy)

Description

"Before" (1998-2003):

- Highly centralized clinical ethics services provided by "lone" PhD-trained bioethicists
- Clinical ethics committee with education-only mandate
- Partnership in University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics (JCB)

Description

After 2003

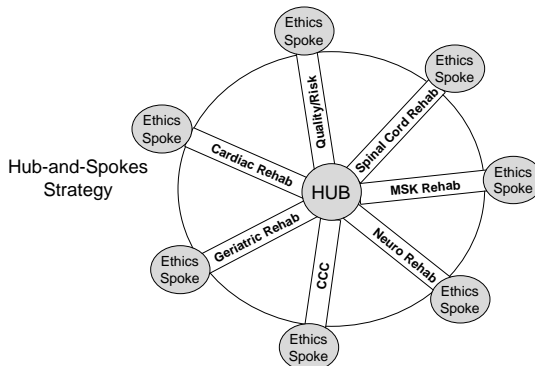
After (2003-)

- JCB develops and pilots “hub-and-spokes” strategy (HSS)
- HSS aims to strengthen staff’s capacity and patient focus in clinical ethics at local unit/program/service/ patient-care level
- Provides decentralized resources co-ordinated by centralized core of clinical ethics leadership

Description

- In collaboration with the JCB, eight hospitals are implementing the HSS
- HSS for clinical ethics is built on principles of
 - patient-centred care
 - capacity strengthening
 - integration
 - sustainability
 - accountability

Discussion: Structure



Discussion: Structure

Components:

1. "Hub" (Bioethicist, Ethics Fellow)
 - co-ordinates and mentors "spokes"
 - provides strategic planning, clinical ethics oversight, quality assurance and accountability
 - conducts comprehensive ethics research and education programs

2. "Spokes" (local Clinical Ethics Facilitators)
 - first contact for ethics consultations
 - co-organizer and participant for ethics in-services
 - member of Clinical Ethics Forum

Discussion: Structure

3. Clinical Ethics Forum (the "hub," the "spokes," patient/family rep, senior management rep)
 - conduct quality case review
 - develop core competencies for ethics consultation
 - organize ethics activities and distribute shareable resources

4. UofT JCB Clinical Ethics Group (bioethicists from all JCB hospitals, clinical ethics fellows, JCB leadership)
 - research on clinical ethics
 - bioethics program support
 - formal and informal case consultation
 - Clinical Ethics Fellowships
 - educational opportunities for JCB hospital staff

Discussion: Forecast

- greater number of consultations with increased local participation and expertise
- expansion of ethics in-services to patient-care areas
- active, more effective Clinical Ethics Forum
- high quality ethics education program for Clinical Ethics Forum, staff, and university students
- enhanced evaluative structure
- robust ethics research program in hospitals

Conclusions

- HSS has the potential to significantly improve ethics consultation and decision-making, ethics education and ethics research for patients
- Participation in the JCB's *Project Examining Effectiveness in Clinical Ethics (PEECE)* will assist in
 - evaluating HSS
 - establishing "good" practices in clinical ethics
