

SPRING SCHOOL MEDICAL ETHICS I

Teaching Philosophical Bioethethics

Have you tried to navigate through the ethical minefield of new developments in modern General Practice?

Ever wondered how you might like to teach Medical Ethics?

Are you unsure about the theory and principles involved?

Are you uncertain if you have the skills to teach it?

Would you like to become actively involved in a seminar to develop these skills?

If so, come and join a whole day, when we will explore the basic principles and theory underpinning Medical Ethics and allow you to develop specific techniques for teaching GP registrars.

Our trainees can find many of the ethical elements of today's medical scenarios to be overwhelming. In this first seminar on Medical Ethics, we aim to enable you to awaken an ethical awareness in your trainees, and to show how this can be invaluable for them in making independent and robust decisions in the real world.

More specifically we outline how to manage the dilemmas that frequently face them with end-of-life decisions.



Morning session

Introduction to Medical Ethics and Competing Ethical Theories

Many of your trainees find themselves with little or no medical ethics training, and then discover themselves faced with the reality of ethical dilemmas, which they find themselves ill-equipped to deal with. We will show you how to awaken the moral awareness of your trainees and we will do this in a step-by-step process as follows -

- We commence with a group exercise designed to discover your default moral stance
- This exercise will help you to discover your moral compass
- We will introduce the philosophical concepts and competing theories governing medical ethics
- We will give you an introduction into Duty-based, Rights-based, Utilitarian and Virtue ethics
- We'll discuss some of the historical background to these theories
- There will be small group work on examining some real case histories from the three major ethical perspectives
- By the end of the session you will take away a practical toolkit for examining ethical dilemmas
- All these exercises will enable you to teach your trainees how to approach ethical issues

Afternoon session

End of Life Decisions

During the afternoon we aim to combine the presentation with open discussion in the group with a number of different exercises, in which we aim -

- To identify the concepts of beings, human beings and persons and to establish what constitutes the value of life
- To look specifically at ageism
- To define and differentiate between “killing” and “letting die” from the standpoint of all the moral theories, and to examine both active and passive euthanasia
- To consider how the doctor’s conduct may influence others
- To discuss the doctrine of double effect
- To establish who takes responsibility for “omissions”
- To examine the legal aspects of some specific landmark court cases
- There will be small group work on several real case histories to put the learning into practice
- To discuss specific guidelines to follow when considering withdrawing life-sustaining treatment