

Inaugural Asian Paediatric Ethics Conference 2nd and 3rd October 2023



Symposium 3 speaker

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Dr Cheryl Loh is Chief and Senior Consultant, Department of Psychological Medicine, Changi General Hospital. She completed her specialty training in Singapore and has a special interest in adolescent mental health, particularly mood disorders, suicidality and deliberate self-harm. She is currently also involved in adolescent mental health research around Social Media Use, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Psychosomatic Disorders. Since 2023, she has been Chairperson of the workgroup for MOH Guidelines for the Treatment of Gender Dysphoria in Adolescents.

Presentation title: To treat or not to treat? Ethical issues with gender-related self-treatment

Abstract

This talk will briefly cover the ethical debate on minors' consent to gender-related care and treatment. It will then present the ethical issues and dilemmas arising from minors who seek formal health services after perceived beneficial self-medication. Care in such cases may be ethically justified on a case-by-case assessment that non-access would result in more harm, and informed consent from both the minor and parents. To serve the best interests of minors seeking gender-related treatments, it is proposed that such treatment should be embedded within a research context.