

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



## Keynote speaker

**Professor Dominic Wilkinson**  
University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Dominic Wilkinson is Professor of Medical Ethics and Deputy Director of the Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, University of Oxford. He is a consultant in newborn intensive care at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford and a senior research fellow at Jesus College Oxford.

Dominic has published more than 200 academic articles relating to ethical issues in intensive care for adults, children and newborn infants. His co-authored books include 'Pandemic Ethics: from COVID-19 to Disease X' (Oxford University Press 2023), 'Medical Ethics and Law, third edition' (Elsevier 2019); 'Ethics, Conflict and Medical treatment for children, from disagreement to dissensus' (Elsevier, 2018) (BMA President's Award in 2018 British Medical Association Book Awards). He is also the author of 'Death or Disability? The 'Carmentis Machine' and decision-making for critically ill children' (Oxford University Press 2013) ("the best book of the decade in bioethics... this is a book that must be read by everybody who is seriously interested in the bioethical issues that arise in neonatal intensive care or, more generally, in decision making for children with chronic, debilitating or life-threatening conditions." (John Lantos, Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews). He was Editor and Associate Editor of the Journal of Medical Ethics from 2011-2018. Twitter: @Neonatalethics

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**Presentation title: 'Deciding with Children' – a third ethical principle in paediatrics**

## **Abstract**

In recent work, clinical ethicists and paediatricians have described and defended an important ethical principle in the care of children. The idea of “deciding with children” strongly encourages paediatricians to take seriously the voice of the child, and to involve them in decisions about the child’s medical care. This principle potentially constitutes a third key ethical norm in paediatrics (alongside ‘the best interests of the child’ and ‘shared decision-making with parents’).

In this lecture, I will explore the ethical boundaries and challenges associated with Deciding With Children. I identify some potential problems including vagueness, and conflicts with other principles. I describe the concept of an ‘Autonomy dependent Zone of Child Discretion’. Finally, I outline when paediatricians shouldn’t aim to decide with children - when decisions should be made by or for children