

RESEARCH ETHICS BULLETIN

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD
CURATED BY CBME

December 2025, Issue 49



NEWS & ARTICLES

Victoria could become first Australian state to ban unnecessary surgery on intersex children

By Benita Kolovos // *The Guardian*

The Australian state of Victoria is introducing legislation to ban deferrable, irreversible medical procedures on intersex infants and children, ensuring such treatments are postponed until the individual is old enough to provide informed consent.

This science sleuth revealed a retraction crisis at Indian universities

By Miryam Naddaf // *Nature News Feature*

Achal Agrawal, a freelance data scientist, has been instrumental in exposing a retraction crisis at Indian universities, leading to a landmark policy change where the National Institutional Ranking Framework will penalize institutions for a significant number of retracted papers, aiming to combat widespread research misconduct.

ADHD diagnoses are growing. What's going on?

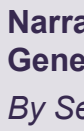
By Helen Pearson // *Nature News Feature*

ADHD diagnoses are increasing globally due to improved detection, greater public awareness (fuelled by social media), and broadened diagnostic criteria, sparking debate between the neurodiversity movement's view of ADHD as a difference and the medical model's focus on it as a condition requiring treatment.

Ghostwriters, polo shirts, and the fall of a landmark pesticide study

By *The Straits Times*

A landmark 2000 study that asserted the safety of the weedkiller Roundup has been retracted after 25 years, exposing serious flaws including undisclosed ghostwriting by Monsanto employees and conflicts of interest, highlighting how corporate influence can compromise scientific integrity and government decision-making.



PUBLICATIONS

“Irresponsible Not to Share Such Important Information”: A Narrative of Responsibility That Underpins Familial Disclosure of Genetic Risk in Singapore

By Serene Ong // *Bioethics*

This study of Singaporean patients with familial hypercholesterolaemia (FH) reveals that their decisions to disclose genetic risk to relatives are primarily motivated by beneficence, emotional proximity, and unprompted notions of responsibility, rather than the rights-based frameworks often emphasized in bioethical discussions.

Relational Autonomy, Dementia, and AI-Based Care Robots: Ethical Aspects of Using Machines to Care for People with Dementia

By Mario Kropf // *Asian Bioethics Review*

This article explores the ethical implications of integrating AI-based care robots for individuals with dementia, arguing that these machines can strengthen relational autonomy by facilitating new forms of interaction, enhancing mobility, and improving communication, thereby contributing positively to dementia care.

When is suicide a public health issue?

By Tessa Jane Holzman & Julian Savulescu // *Journal of Medical Ethics*

The article critiques the dominant public health approach to suicide prevention in Australia. It argues for a more nuanced strategy that distinguishes between rational and irrational suicides, and for supporting individuals with treatment-resistant suicidal ideation in achieving a "good death" when appropriate.

Should digital health trials be placebo controlled?

By Leo Druart & Charlotte Blease // *JME Practical Bioethics*

The rapid proliferation of digital health interventions necessitates rigorous, ethically sound placebo-controlled trials to prevent inflated efficacy claims, obscure harms, and maintain patient trust, addressing a critical gap in current evaluation methodologies.

Global Horrendous Evil: A Cautionary Tale Against Procreation

By Tianxiang Lan // *Asian Bioethics Review*

This paper examines the ethical justification for collective human procreation, arguing that persistent global suffering challenges prevailing assumptions and invites deeper reflection on antinatalism within contemporary philosophical discourse.

BLOG POSTS

When nurses become researchers: ethical challenges in doctoral supervision

By Pär Segerdahl // *The Ethics Blog*

This blog post discusses the ethical challenges in doctoral supervision for nurses transitioning into research, highlighting issues like balancing clinical work with academic demands, unclear expectations, and lack of training, and suggests using bioethical principles and structured support to improve supervision.

How lived-experience narratives could transform dementia support

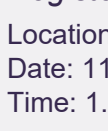
By Linda O'Raw, Stefan Rennick-Egglestone & Briony Harden // *Springer Nature Research Communities*

The Lived Experience Narratives in Dementia (LEND) Programme aims to ethically transform dementia support by curating and utilizing lived-experience stories from people with dementia into a safe, culturally responsive digital tool to enhance learning, wellbeing, identity, and empathy, thereby improving person-centered care.

When artificial agents begin to outperform us

By Anibal M. Astobiza // *Springer Nature Research Communities*

A simulation of 157,000 artificial humans revealed that as AI systems prioritize alignment and optimization, the space for human agency may shrink, raising ethical concerns about the potential for AI to marginalize human judgment and creativity in pursuit of systemic coherence.



VIDEOS

Why should clinical students study the humanities? - CBmE Health Humanities Hub

By Professor Peter Singer, VK Rajah Visiting Professor (NUS), Associate Professor Nicola Siew Pei Ngiam (NUS), Dr Ann Toh (NUS)

A multidisciplinary panel explores why clinical students should study the humanities, highlighting the value of philosophy, narrative medicine, and cultural perspectives in health education and practice.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Ethics of Unsolicited Clinical Trial Recruitment via Electronic Health Records (EHRs)

Register Now.

Location: Shaw Foundation Alumni House, Coriander Room, Level 2, Singapore
Date: 11 Feb 2026
Time: 1.30pm to 5.15pm

18th World Congress of Bioethics

Register Now.

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa
Date: 8 to 10 July 2026