

CLINICAL ETHICS BULLETIN

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD
CURATED BY CBME

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NEWS & ARTICLES

Childhood vaccination rates are declining in Australia. Why?

By *Natasha May // The Guardian*

Australia's childhood vaccination rates have fallen from their 2020 peak, with a 2025 survey showing more parents are hesitant due to misinformation, distress about vaccinating, and reduced trust in health advice. Experts warn this raises outbreak risks such as measles and urge easier access and supportive GP conversations to rebuild confidence.

Single dose of potent psychedelic drug could help treat depression, trial shows

By *Ian Sample // The Guardian*

A small trial found that a single intravenous dose of DMT combined with psychotherapy produced rapid, significant reductions in symptoms among people with treatment-resistant depression, with benefits lasting up to three to six months. The findings add to a growing body of research suggesting psychedelic-assisted therapy (including psilocybin) may help some patients who do not respond to existing antidepressants.

UK clinical trial into puberty blockers on hold after medicines regulator steps in

By *Nadeem Badshah // The Guardian*

The UK's Pathways clinical trial of puberty blockers has been paused after the MHRA raised safety concerns and said participants should be no younger than 14 because potential long-term biological harms remain unquantified. The trial was set up in response to the 2024 Cass review, which said evidence for benefits in under-18s was poor, and after NHS England stopped routine prescribing so puberty blockers would be used only within approved research studies.

Trump revokes landmark ruling that greenhouse gases endanger public health

By *Matt McGrath // BBC*

Trump has revoked the EPA's 2009 "endangerment finding", the scientific determination that greenhouse gases threaten public health that serves as the legal foundation for most US federal emissions rules, especially vehicle standards. The White House says the move will cut regulatory costs and lower car prices, while environmental groups and experts warn it would weaken climate and health protections and is likely to be challenged in court.



PUBLICATIONS

Ethical Uncertainties: Diverging and Emerging Regulations of Assisted Dying/Assisted Suicide and the Potential Role of Clinical Ethics

By *Katherine Wasson, Kathleen Benton, Karin Bruckmüller, Melissa Gaule, Pola Hahlweg, Ralf J. Jox, Renzo Pegoraro, Anne Slowther, Stella Reiter-Theil // Bioethics*

The article compares how assisted suicide/assisted dying (AS/AD) is regulated in the UK, Italy, Austria, the US, Switzerland and Germany, showing a spectrum from restrictive to permissive and legally uncertain "gray zones" that create moral dilemmas, including around conscientious objection. It argues that clinical ethics support (consultation, education and policy work) can help clinicians, patients and institutions navigate these uncertainties and shape good practice, especially for complex cases.

How a Zhuangzian Lens Might Shape the Doctor-Patient Relationship—A Critical Analysis

By *Alexa Nord-Bronzyk, Kathryn Muyskens // Asian Bioethics Review*

The article argues that Zhuangzi's Daoist ideas can reframe the doctor-patient relationship away from rigid, rule-based or cure-centred assumptions toward adaptive, open-minded, context-sensitive care. Focusing on chronic illness and disability, it proposes a "reciprocal-emerging" relationship over time, while also noting practical limits to applying this lens in modern medicine.

How families shape the path to hormone replacement therapy for transgender and gender diverse youth in Singapore: A qualitative study

By *Shilpa Surendran, Brian D Earp, Teck Chuan Voo, and Michael Dunn // International Journal of Transgender Health*

Semi-structured interviews with transgender youth and parents indicate that decisions regarding hormone replacement therapy for transgender youth in Singapore are significantly shaped by family dynamics and negotiations in the context of Asian values.

The Ethics of Wegovy in Pediatric Mental Health

By *Nanette Ryan and Julian Savulescu // Bioethics*

The authors argue that semaglutide (Wegovy) offers promising benefits for adolescents' mental health by reducing weight stigma and enhancing self-esteem. But while uncertainty around its long-term effects, barriers to access, and the risk of reinforcing stigma persist, they conclude that cautious prescribing, safeguards, and structural reform are needed.

There is no consequentialist ethical justification for registries of conscientious non-objectors

By *Udo Schuklenk and Julian Savulescu // Journal of Medical Ethics*

In this commentary, Schuklenk and Savulescu challenge an argument for requiring doctors without conscientious objections to be registered with a relevant health authority, as being ethically incoherent, wasteful of valuable healthcare resources and insensitive to patients' interests and values.



BLOG POSTS

Equity and ethnicity in the ICU: considering a reserve system when resources are scarce

By *Elizabeth Fenton, Esther Willing, Neil Pickering, Wenna Yeo, Sophie Barham // JME Forum*

Fenton and colleagues explore whether reserving some scarce ICU beds for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand could mitigate inequities. ICU stakeholders acknowledged urgent Māori health inequities but were hesitant due to concerns about unfairly excluding non-Māori patients and the political acceptability of similar alternatives) warrants further study given evidence that ethnicity predicts need beyond deprivation.

Medical ethics when ICE comes knocking

By *G. Owen Schaefer // JME Forum*

Schaefer discusses a case in which a US doctor allegedly falsified a diagnosis to admit an injured patient and prevent ICE detention, highlighting a dilemma between protecting patients from harm and maintaining professional honesty. He argues that while absolute honesty may allow rare exceptions in extreme life-or-death cases, deception in medicine is especially risky because it can undermine trust in diagnoses and the integrity of the profession, leaving clinicians with no clearly good options when enforcement enters clinical spaces.

Honoring Alex Pretti's Moral Courage and the Cost of Caring

By *Connie M. Ulrich, Mary D. Naylor and Martha A. Q. Curley // The Hastings Center for Bioethics - Bioethics Forum*

Ulrich, Naylor and Curley honor ICU nurse Alex Pretti, killed while protecting a woman during an anti-immigration protest, as an example of nursing's ethical commitment to social justice and civic engagement. They argue that immigration enforcement in healthcare spaces fuels fear, erodes trust, and drives moral distress among clinicians, and call for "safe zones," limits on enforcement access, and confidential reporting mechanisms to protect patients and uphold professional ethics.



VIDEOS & PODCAST

Losing and Supporting Capacity with Emily Largent

By *CBmE&U*

Assistant Professor Emily Largent (University of Pennsylvania) discusses decision-making capacity, dementia, and how legal frameworks should adapt to recognise the whole class of people who have mild cognitive impairments who need to make decisions.

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

By *Centre for Biomedical Ethics*

Well-designed clinical trials rely on efficiently identifying eligible patients. Using EHRs offers promise but raises consent concerns. This workshop examines ethical questions surrounding EHR use for participant identification.



UPCOMING EVENTS

GLP-1 in Children and Adolescents: Navigating the Ethical Landscape

Register Now.

Mode: Online via Zoom
Date: Friday 8 May 2026
Time: 3.00 to 6.00pm (SGT)

18th World Congress of Bioethics

Register Now.

Mode: In-person in Johannesburg, South Africa
Date: 8th Jul 2026 to 10th Jul 2026

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