

# CLINICAL ETHICS BULLETIN

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
CURATED BY CBME

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## NEWS & ARTICLES

### Commentary: Your leftover blood samples are valuable to science – but they are often discarded

By Shaun SE Loong, Kylie Heng, Roger Foo, and Jerry Menikoff // Channel News Asia

The authors argue that routinely discarding blood, tissue, and other biospecimen leftover after clinical use represents a major lost opportunity for socially valuable research, and recommend using an opt-out system for obtaining consent to use of clinical samples for research.

### More than 84,500 people have signed advance medical directive in Singapore to date

By Yap Wei Qiang // The Straits Times

Beyond the numbers, this piece reports parliamentary discussions on measures to enhance uptake of Advance Medical Directives as a mechanism for refusing extraordinary life-sustaining treatment in Singapore.

### Commentary: If death is certain, why are we not talking about it?

By Sim Bee Hia and Norhisham bin Main // Channel News Asia

Framing “death literacy” as a neglected civic and ethical competency, the authors argue against avoiding end-of-life conversations about dying, caregiving, and legal planning, and suggest measures to improve access to legacy planning tools like Lasting Power of Attorney.

### Doctors need to stop pretending to have all the answers. ‘I don’t know’ does not mean ‘I have nothing to offer’

By Ranjana Srivastava // The Guardian

Arguing against the culture of medical infallibility, this commentary contends that acknowledging uncertainty can reflect moral strength rather than professional failure, making room for more honest, humane, and supportive doctor-patient relationships.

### Singapore needs more mental health professionals but pricing, regulation of services need a closer look

By Nicole Lam // Channel News Asia

This report offers a bird’s-eye view of the mental health system in Singapore, observing that expanding supply is not simply a manpower issue, but a broader governance challenge involving affordability, quality control, supervision capacity, and closer scrutiny of how mental health services are regulated.

### Migrant workers hesitate to seek mental health support due to job loss fear, misconceptions: Study

By Christine Tan // The Straits Times

A recent study suggests fear of dismissal, limited awareness, and misconceptions about coverage as deterring migrant workers in Singapore from seeking formal mental health support.

### Commentary: Ageing Singapore could use a better way of thinking about ‘good’ healthcare for seniors

By Faisal Johandi, Philip Yap, and Tan Kok Yang // Channel News Asia

The authors call for a reevaluation of the metrics of clinical success towards judging care not merely in terms of measurable outcomes and costs, but also by whether care is proportionate, value-sensitive, and aligned with what matters to frail seniors themselves.

## PUBLICATIONS

### The Enduring Promise of Personalising Patient Preference Prediction

By Brian D Earp, Sebastian Porsdam Mann, Tessa van Veenendaal, Jemima Allen, Sabine Salloch, et al. // Neuroethics

In defence of their proposal of the P4 model for predicting treatment preferences of incapacitated patients, the authors evaluate and respond to broad criticisms but maintain that such systems may still improve substituted decision-making if carefully designed, regulated, and used alongside human judgment.

### All you need is.... justification: algorithmic justifiability trumps transparency

By Anantharam Muralisharan and Julian Savulescu // Ethics and Information Technology

Challenging the dominance of algorithmic transparency in AI ethics, this paper argues that what matters more is not how an algorithm reaches its decision but whether it can justify why that decision is correct.

### Ziran (自然): the Daoist concept of naturalness, non-intervention and gentle medicine

By Kathryn Muyskens, Alexa Nord-Bronzyk, and Shizuko Takahashi // Journal of Medical Ethics

Using the Daoist concept of ziran, this piece challenges the default assumption in medicine that intervention is always preferable, to illustrate how non-intervention can itself be an ethically meaningful form of care.

### Psychedelics Are Still Not Ethically Exceptional: Rebutting Recent Claims of Uniqueness

By Brian D Earp, Katherine Cheung, and David B Yaden // Neuroethics

Rebutting claims that psychedelics require sui generis ethical treatment, this paper argues that concerns about suggestibility, autonomy, and vulnerability are not unique to psychedelics and can be addressed within existing medical ethics frameworks.

### Justifiability and AI: putting explainability in its place

By Boris Babic, I Glenn Cohen, and Julian Savulescu // AI & Society

This paper argues that explainability is neither necessary nor sufficient for trustworthy AI, and that the worthwhile task is to justify algorithmic decisions with persuasive normative reasons rather than post hoc technical rationalisations.

### Kotodama (言霊): the spirit of words in medicine in Japan

By Shizuko Takahashi and Kiyoshi Ando // Journal of Medical Ethics

This paper explores how the Japanese concept of kotodama casts words as spiritually, morally and therapeutically potent, highlighting how language in medicine can influence reality, harm, or restore dignity in ways that Western clinical communication tends to underestimate.

### Moral Distress and the Cost of Caring Amongst Medical Oncologists in Singapore

By Varsha Rajalingam, Yutian Yu, Yun Ting Ong, Annushka Sinnathambay, Nila Ravidran, et al. // American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine

Semi-structured interviews with 12 Singaporean oncologists reveal that moral distress is not an isolated event but part of a broader “cost of caring” that can evolve into compassion fatigue, trauma, and burnout, underscoring the need for sustained institutional support and safer practice environments.

### No job, no access? Is differential treatment based on vaccination (wrongfully) discriminatory?

By Lydia Tsiakiri and Andreas Albertsen // Journal of Medical Ethics

Examining pandemic policies that disadvantaged the unvaccinated, the authors argue that while such measures can count as direct or indirect discrimination, their wrongfulness depends on how certain theories are applied and weighed, including harms, interference with freedoms, disrespect, and the responsibility borne for remaining unvaccinated.

## BLOG POSTS

### Updated Endometriosis Guidelines: A Step Forward in Ethical Reproductive Healthcare

By Melanie Jeske, Heather Welty, Meghan Larson, Sophie Schott, and Faith E Fletcher // Hastings Bioethics Forum

The ACOG’s recent shift towards a more patient-centered approach to diagnosing endometriosis is commendable. But this post argues that while expedited diagnosis is clinically and ethically necessary, it remains inadequate without tackling the deeper justice-related issues in reproductive care including dismissal, underfunding, stigma, and unequal access to effective treatment.

### The family inside (out): reflections on digital advance directives and ethics in film

By Michiel De Proost // Ethox Centre Blog

This post reflects on the ethical complexities in digital advance directives using the film The Sea Inside, challenging overly individualistic models of autonomy that tend to sideline familial bonds.

### Patients Are Seeking Illicit Drug Advice from AI. What Standard of Care Should Apply?

By Julia Etkin and Vincent Joralemon // Bill of Health - The Petrie Flom Center Blog

The authors argue that as patients increasingly turn to AI for advice about illicit or high-risk drug use, the key legal and ethical question is about the standard of care that must govern AI’s responses—especially where harm reduction, safety, and liability may conflict.

## VIDEOS & PODCAST

### Therobot versus a Tic Tac with Charlotte Blease

By Hosts: James Edgar Lim and Sinead Prince // CBmE & U

Associate Professor Charlotte Blease (Uppsala University) discusses the ethics of mental health chatbots, examining placebo effects, the difficulty of measuring benefit or harm, and whether our growing reliance on AI—both in care contexts and everyday communication—risks displacing human judgement and relationships.

### Highlights from the Asian Bioethics Network (ABN) Conference 2025

Relive the highlights of the Asian Bioethics Network (ABN) Conference 2025, held on 23–24 October in Singapore. The theme, “Navigating the Ethical Maze for Tomorrow’s Medicine,” brought together bioethics leaders, policymakers, and healthcare professionals from 15 member states across Asia-Pacific.

## 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)

### 9th Asia Dengue Summit (ADS)

Venue: Orchard Hotel Singapore

Date: 15-17 June 2026

### 18th World Congress of Bioethics

Register Now!

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

Date: 8-10 July 2026

### Neuroethics Asia Conference 2026

Call for Abstracts! (Abstract submission deadline: 31 May 2026)

Venue: NUSS Kent Ridge Guild House, Singapore

Date: 6-7 November 2026

### Essential Topics in Clinical Ethics (ETCE) Course

Register Now!

Mode: Online via Zoom

Date: 22 Jul 2026 to 12 Aug 2026 (Every Wednesday)

Time: 2.00 to 4.15pm (SGT)

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