

# RESEARCH ETHICS BULLETIN

NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD  
CURATED BY CBME

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## NEWS & ARTICLES

### **The EU needs to back its ambition to end animal testing with cash**

*By Nature*

The European Union has produced a "roadmap" for eliminating animals in chemical safety testing. However, it does not specify the timelines for achieving its proposed goals. Moreover, achieving those goals will require a serious funding commitment.

### **How AI is reshaping discovery in maths and physics**

*By Mikhail Burtsev, Yang-Hui He, Evgeny Sobko, Ananyo*

*Bhattacharya and Thore Graepel // Nature*

AI is increasingly acting as a powerful partner for theoretical physicists that helps check proofs, formalize ideas, search for counterexamples, and generate promising conjectures. The deeper parts of discovery, e.g., choosing worthwhile questions, exercising judgment, and supplying creative insight, still depend on human intuition.

### **'Parasitic cleanses' are the latest health trend to infest social media. But what does the evidence say?**

*By Melissa Davey // The Guardian*

Social-media "parasitic cleanses" are being marketed for vague symptoms like fatigue and brain fog, but experts say true parasitic infections are uncommon for most healthy people in developed cities and that there is little evidence these cleanses work. Experts advise that suspected parasites should be diagnosed by trained medical professionals, not by influencer claims or stool photos.

### **ICO watchdog opens inquiry into cameras in mental health patients' bedrooms**

*By Matthew Weaver // The Guardian*

The UK Information Commissioner's Office has opened an investigation into Oxevision, a camera-and-sensor monitoring system used in about 40% of NHS mental health trusts, over concerns about privacy, consent, and how highly sensitive patient data is collected and handled. Critics, including bereaved families and campaigners, argue the system is intrusive and can worsen distress or replace proper in-person care, while the company says it helps staff detect self-harm and save lives.

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Size Does Matter! Prioritizing Rare Diseases for Luck Egalitarian Reasons**

*By Didde Boisen Andersen, Andreas Brøgger Albertsen, Sarah Wadmann, Mickael Bech // Bioethics*

The article argues that rare diseases deserve extra priority in healthcare because patients with rare diseases suffer from "bad numbers luck" — unfair disadvantages that come from belonging to a very small patient group. It concludes that health systems may be justified in adjusting cost-effectiveness rules, willingness-to-pay thresholds, or payment models to reduce this unfairness.

### **Computer Says: I Don't Know? – On Epistemic Humility as a Condition for Human-AI Collaboration**

*By Georg Starke, Jojanneke Drogts, Karin Jongsma // The American Journal of Bioethics*

The article argues that good human-AI collaboration in medicine requires AI systems to support epistemic humility — meaning they should make their limits, uncertainty, and missing context visible instead of presenting outputs as final or authoritative answers. Medical AI should be designed to encourage reflective, careful clinical judgment, and preserve the central role of human deliberation.

### **Ethical Veganism and Animal Ingredients in Medications**

*By Rainer Ebert // Asian Bioethics Review*

The article argues that medicines with animal-derived ingredients can conflict with ethical vegans' deeply held moral commitments. Given that ethical veganism, while not a religion, can play a role in patients' lives comparable to religious belief, it should be respected in similar ways in medical decision-making, and thus, doctors should disclose animal-derived drug ingredients as part of informed consent.

### **Advance Research Directives and Supported Consent in Dementia Research**

*By Nevena Divac & Nikola Samardžić // Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*

The article argues that neither proxy consent nor standard one-time consent works well for dementia research, and proposes combining advance research directives with supported decision-making to better respect people's past values and present wishes.

### **Is sport in the 'public interest'? Towards a legal and ethical framework for justifying sport-related harm**

*By Jennifer Hardes Dvorak // Journal of Medical Ethics*

The article argues that sport's special legal tolerance for serious bodily harm may not be ethically justified, especially given evidence about long-term concussion and head-injury risks. It proposes a proportionality framework that asks whether sport serves a legitimate public aim, whether the harms are actually connected to that aim, whether less harmful alternatives exist, and whether the benefits outweigh the burdens imposed on participants.

## BLOG POSTS

### **The UK plans to ban romantic AI chatbots for under-18s. Young people have bigger worries about AI.**

*By Madeline G. Reinecke // Practical Ethics*

The post argues that banning romantic AI chatbots for under-18s addresses only a narrow risk and misses the bigger AI harms young people say they actually face, such as over-relying on AI for emotional support, trusting expert-sounding answers, and losing skills through habitual use. It calls for a better approach focused on AI literacy, safer design features, and involving young people directly in shaping AI policy.

### **Psychiatry and the actualization of freedom**

*By Austin Lam // JME Forum*

The post argues that psychiatry is never morally neutral because it inevitably makes judgments about agency, autonomy, and recovery. Drawing on Hegel, it says recovery should be understood as restoring a person's ability to participate meaningfully in social life, which means psychiatry also depends on supportive institutions like housing, care continuity, relationships, and community.

### **First, do no harm – then what?**

*By Amir Davoodi // JME Forum*

The post argues that when governments turn healthcare into a tool of surveillance and repression, medical neutrality breaks down and physicians must at minimum avoid becoming complicit in harm. It proposes a "sliding scale" of moral obligation, where the basic duty not to harm is constant but the form of resistance depends on each physician's risk, capacity, and degree of safety.

## VIDEOS & PODCAST

### **Brains in Jars with Insoo Hyun**

*By Hosts: Sinead Prince // CBmE & U Podcast*

Professor Insoo Hyun (Harvard Medical School) discusses the exciting science of brain organoids, raising core questions about their moral status, donor rights, consent, ownership.

## UPCOMING EVENT

### **MME Matters: Biomedical Ethics for Every Doctor**

*Register Now!*

Mode: Online, NUS Learning Management System

### **18th World Congress of Bioethics**

*Register Now!*

Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

Date: 8-10 July 2026

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

*[5 spots left] Register Now!*

Mode: Online via Zoom

Date: 22 July 2026 - 12 August 2026 (Every Wednesday)

Time: 2.00 to 4.15pm (SGT)

### **Neuroethics Asia Conference 2026**

*Register Now!*

Venue: NUSS Kent Ridge Guild House, Singapore

Date: 6-7 November 2026

### **Australasian Association of Bioethics and Health Law**

*Register Now!*

Venue: Boorloo/Perth, Western Australia

Date: 29 November 2026 - 2 December 2026

### **CENTRES Clinical Ethics Conference 2027**

*Save the date!*

Venue: Shaw Foundation Alumni House, Singapore

Date: 28 - 29 January 2027

### **Singapore Research Ethics Conference 2027**

*Save the date!*

Venue: One Farrer Hotel, Singapore

Date: 23 - 24 March 2027