



OHSU CENTER FOR ETHICS IN HEALTH CARE

# Impact Report 2023



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This has been a year of unprecedented growth and impact for the Center for Ethics that we are excited to build upon in the years ahead. The future is alive with possibility.

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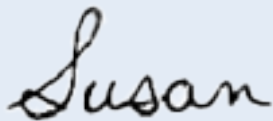
**SUSAN W. TOLLE, M.D.**

CORNELIA HAYES STEVENS CHAIR AND DIRECTOR, OHSU CENTER FOR ETHICS IN HEALTH CARE



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Through the power of private philanthropy, the Center for Ethics in Health Care has experienced tremendous growth in recent years. Being 96% funded by your support, we have expanded our capacity and resources to meet the needs of Oregon through ethics and communication education, outreach, policy and research. In our growth, we have been fortunate to assemble an exceptional team of faculty and staff, capable of leading each of their programs into the future, creating enduring legacies of our shared visions while avoiding the conflicts of interest that accompany industry funding. Through your generosity, we are making a difference in addressing new challenges and advocating for those who need it most.*



**SUSAN W. TOLLE, M.D.**

Cornelia Hayes Stevens Chair  
Director, OHSU Center for  
Ethics in Health Care

## Serious Illness Education

Katie H. Stowers, D.O., **Ronald W. Naito Director in Serious Illness Education**

- Tested 165 graduating medical students from the Class of 2023, the largest class size yet, on competency in patient-centered communication skills. The Center has tested 927 students since the onset of testing six years ago.
- Developed and refined communication skills workshops for eight academic and clinical programs within OHSU and its partner organizations throughout this past year.
- Led 25 workshops teaching medical residents, fellows and practicing clinicians serious illness communication skills.
- Designed a regional outreach program to identify and train health care leaders in Oregon to become communication skills educators, and mentored them in creating enduring training programs. This effort is funded by a grant from **The Kinsman Foundation**.
- Hired two additional faculty communication coaches, for a total of four coaches, to meet the high demand for communication skills training. Funding support for the coaches comes from the **Storms Family Foundation**.

## Professionalism and Comfort Care

Tyler Tate, M.D., M.A., **Director of Professionalism and Comfort Care**

*Funded by the Miles J. Edwards Chair in Professionalism and Comfort Care Endowment*

- Co-chaired the 32nd annual **Kinsman Bioethics Conference**. The statewide conference was held in-person in Lebanon, Oregon this year and had 140 attendees. It featured three plenary talks, four panel discussions and 13 breakout sessions over two days. .
- Published three peer-reviewed manuscripts and four peer-reviewed abstracts on ethics, palliative care and disability. Dr. Tate also gave six national and international invited presentations.
- Directed the **Living with Life-Threatening Illness** elective course. Most students rate the course as the best class in medical school. The course had a waiting list of students wanting to enroll.



### Confronting Serious Illness with Compassion:

Honoring values, attending to emotions and communicating clearly are important skills to learn in caring for seriously ill or dying patients. These skills help bring compassion and empathy to the forefront of patient care.

## Program in Compassionate Communication

Cliff Coleman, M.D., M.P.H., **Doris and Mark Storms Chair in Compassionate Communication**

- Mapped the entire medical school curriculum for required courses relating to communication, professionalism and ethics. This map is now a tool that can be used to identify gaps in the required curriculum for different topics, such as ageism.
- Developed two new, required clinical skills labs for medical students. These labs focus on treating patients with disabilities and caring for and empowering aging patients.
- Gave nine international, national and institutional presentations on health literacy and clear communication. Some specific topics included vaccine hesitancy, systemic ageism, palliative care and diabetes.
- Validated a novel method to quantify the use of medical jargon during clinical encounters to help evaluate and monitor the impact of teaching clear communication skills in the curriculum.

## Ethics Education

Maureen Kelley, Ph.D., **Madeline Brill Nelson Chair in Ethics Education**

- Revised eight cases for the Pain Intersession elective to ensure a holistic focus on pain and ethics in regards to racial and gender inequities in pain treatment.
- Coordinated the **Madeline Brill Nelson Speaker Series in Medical Ethics** and the **Daniel Labby Seminar in Medical Ethics**.
- Gave five invited bioethics presentations, including topics on decision-making, bioethics research, vulnerability and diversity.
- Published six peer-reviewed manuscripts on bioethics research.

Dr. Kelley left OHSU to join the faculty at Wake Forest University. We thank Dr. Kelley for her contributions to the Center and wish her well in her future endeavors.

## Oregon POLST Program

Christine Mullooney, M.D., **Medical Director of the Oregon POLST Program**

*Funded by the Bill and Helen Jo Whitsell Endowment for Ethics*

- Appointed Christine Mullooney, M.D., as Medical Director of the Oregon POLST (Portable Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) Program. Her appointment took effect in July 2023.
- Created culturally adapted factsheets for patients that introduce POLST in clear language and with cultural sensitivity. These factsheets were created in partnership with community health workers and translated into the 10 most commonly spoken languages in Oregon.
- Led POLST innovation by implementing a new version of the POLST form, which provides greater equity and better protections to vulnerable populations. This is the 14th version of the Oregon POLST form.

## Educating Future Health Care Ethics Leaders

*Funded by the Educate Future Health Care Ethics Leaders Endowed Fund*

Dr. Tyler Tate has done behind-the-scenes work to begin laying the foundational framework of this new program. He hosted five guest speakers for the **Oregon Bioethics and Humanities Colloquium (OBHC)** lecture series, focusing on a variety of bioethics topics from a humanities lens. With support from Osamu Muramoto, M.D., M.A., and the M. Lowell Edwards Foundation, he has planned a robust lecture series for the upcoming academic year. Visit the Center's website for more details.



### Health Literacy Helps Achieve Healthy

**Outcomes:** Using clear language and educational tools helps patients better understand health information and make health decisions. Giving clear instructions for taking medicine helps improve a patient's ability to take medication correctly and safely.



**Culturally Responsive Innovation:** The Oregon POLST Program leads innovation by making culturally responsive POLST resources available for patients and families. This image is from the Traditional Chinese version of the POLST factsheet.



### Highlighting Humanism in Bioethics:

OBHC brings a holistic approach to bioethics mentorship by connecting the dots between the humanities, medicine and ethics.

*We remain full of gratitude to all those who have made this work possible. Thank you.*

“  
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change  
the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.  
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**MARGARET MEAD**



**Susan W. Tolle, M.D.**  
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and Comfort Care



**Christine Mullooney, M.D.**  
Medical Director of the  
Oregon POLST Program

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