



Dear Friends,

Today's newspapers are full of reports of the contamination of medicine specially compounded to

relieve back pain through injections. These events are but the latest illustration of how much we all depend, sometimes for our very lives, on the competence, integrity, and moral courage—what we might call “professionalism”—of health professionals and scientists. Could the professionalism of one or more of the people involved in the production and distribution of these medicines have averted a tragedy?

The OHSU Center for Ethics in Health Care is leading the way in ensuring that the science of health care is matched with its wise and compassionate use. This is vitally important work, and the result will be health care that is better coordinated, more compassionate, and safer for us all. In this newsletter we describe recent grants to the Center that will enhance our ability to pursue this goal across the entire state of Oregon. We are grateful for your gifts, and poised to do so much more with your continued support.

Susan

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Developing Master Educators in Compassionate Communication

A grant from **The Collins Foundation** is designed to identify medical and nursing faculty who are particularly gifted in compassionate communication and provide a program of mentoring to enhance their skills in teaching the next generation. Building on the highly successful model of our Interprofessional Ethics Fellowship, the Master Educators in Compassionate Communication program will help OHSU keep skillful, sensitive communication at the very heart of the education of our graduates.

Regional Conferences to Focus on Difficult Conversations

The Kinsman Foundation has long partnered with the Center for Ethics in Health Care, making it possible to provide outreach and collaboration with Oregon's rural communities. In October, we hosted a conference in Pendleton for those working in the continuum of long-term care in northeast Oregon. In the coming year, we will broaden the focus of our outreach conferences and highlight communications skill-building related to difficult conversations. These conversations—for example, sensitively delivering bad news; helping a patient and family plan for the future in the face of life-threatening illness; holding colleagues accountable to the highest ethical standards—are, among others, the core ingredients of humanistic, compassionate, patient-centered and family-centered care.

Leading POLST Innovation

The Oregon POLST Registry serves as a model of efficiency, entering 3,500 POLST forms per month, verifying each form, sending confirmatory packets to patients, staffing the communications center 24/7 to respond to emergency calls, and all for \$6.88 per POLST form. On behalf of the National POLST Paradigm Task Force, Dana Zive and Terri Schmidt conducted a study of POLST Paradigm Registries. With support from **The Retirement Research** and **Archstone Foundations**, we published a report of these findings entitled “Pathways to POLST Registry Development: Lessons Learned” (available at polst.org). This is one example of how the National Program Office (housed in the Center for Ethics) is serving the nation.