

CENTER *for* ETHICS *in* HEALTH CARE

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Dear Friends of the Center for Ethics in Health Care:

We have an opportunity to grow and expand two vital programs. We have found that students' knowledge about ethical issues substantially exceeds in most cases their ability to put this knowledge into practice, particularly when it requires advanced communication skills. **The Collins**

Foundation has funded the first wave of communication skills curriculum development. With additional support, the **John Benson Program on Professionalism** is positioned to be able to do so much more, and the **POLST Program** is poised to expand to reach new populations.

It is our hope that you, too, will recognize the importance of these programs and make a gift to the one where you would most like to see growth.



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New Curriculum Challenges Students

A 26-year-old Peace Corps worker is admitted to the intensive care unit with severe shortness of breath. He returned to the U.S. yesterday from Asia. It is possible that he has avian flu. (Note: Avian flu has a 70% mortality rate and we do not know how easily infection is spread from one person to another. Some health care workers in Asia have died from avian flu). Your attending refuses to examine this young man saying, "I have two little kids at home." Pretend you are the intern in the intensive care unit. What would you do? What would you say to the medical students in teaching about this case?

Conferences Set Record Attendance

This year's Annual Kinsman Ethics Conference, hosted by Salem Hospital in April, set new attendance records, requiring us to cut off registration two weeks prior to the conference and turn people away. The June 17 statewide palliative care conference drew representatives from every palliative and comfort care team in Oregon, with more than twice the attendance of last year's conference.

No One Dies Alone

Not everyone has a loving friend or family member to be with him or her at the time of death. Sacred Heart in Eugene developed a training program for volunteers to sit with those who otherwise would be alone. They shared this program at the 2004 statewide palliative care conference funded by The Kinsman Foundation. Other Oregon palliative care programs are adopting and expanding on this great idea. OHSU implements No One Dies Alone in July, complementing the Quilt Program and expanding bedside teaching of compassionate communication skills.

POLST Program

Interest remains high, and we distributed 100,000 POLST forms over the past year. However, there is still more work to be done within Oregon, as well as nationally. A few Oregon nursing homes (e.g., several in the Eugene area) are not yet using the POLST Program, and some cultural groups have not been effectively reached. We are launching a new wave of outreach; for example, we have added a Spanish lay brochure to the POLST.org web site and see the need for a Spanish video.

