

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
NATIONAL CENTER FOR ETHICS IN HEALTH CARE**

HEALTH CARE ETHICS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

FY 2017

The National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC) invites qualified individuals to apply to the VA Health Care Ethics Fellowship Program (HCEFP). Qualified individuals are VA employees who have demonstrated through their performance and experience the interest and ability to become highly skilled, knowledgeable and professional ethics consultants and ethics leaders available to VHA's patients, family and staff.

NCEHC serves as VA's authoritative resource for addressing the complex ethical issues that arise in patient care, health care management and research. Our mission is to establish, interpret and communicate ethical standards in health care and promote practice within those standards in VA and nationwide. NCEHC accomplishes this by managing and supporting VHA IntegratedEthics® programs, and ethics-related policy, education, research and evaluation. A major area of focus is improving ethics consultation practices. The overarching goal of the Health Care Ethics Fellowship Program is to develop a cadre of ethics consultants who possess and demonstrate ethics knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to function as expert ethics consultants and ethics leaders within VA (e.g., ethics consultation coordinator, IntegratedEthics point of contact).

The goal of the HCEFP is to develop an interdisciplinary group of clinician and non-clinician ethics consultants who possess and demonstrate ethics consultation expertise across the broad range of Domains of Ethics in Health Care and strong ethics consultation practices that are consistent with the CASES approach as described in the IntegratedEthics® Program materials. The advanced ethics consultation training will serve as a springboard for participants to become an ethics resource to their VISNs and to provide guidance and support to other ethics consultants to improve the quality of ethics consultation. This comprehensive program is founded upon VA I CARE values. It incorporates ethics consultation knowledge and skills as described in the *Report of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities: Core Competencies for Healthcare Ethics Consultation, 2nd Edition* that was adapted for VHA in the Ethics Consultation Proficiency Assessment Tool (ECPAT). It is also consistent with the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities for Healthcare Ethics Consultants published by the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities in 2014.

The HCEFP is designed to train, develop and create a cadre of staff with expertise in ethics consultation and health care ethics in general. Specifically, at the end of the fellowship the participant will have:

- developed the organizational and leadership competencies required to fill the role of an ethics leader within VA;
- utilized the CASES approach to develop a portfolio of no less than 10 ethics consultations;
- appropriately documented this portfolio of ethics consultations in ECWeb;
- demonstrated proficiency in the applied ethics skills and attitudes, including those taught in EC Beyond the Basics; and
- learned to identify and assess VA and general bioethics literature to serve as authoritative sources of ethics knowledge for ethics consultation and for teaching other ethics consultants on the service.

KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

- A minimum of **2 years** of experience or having done or participated on **15 completed ethics consultations**. Experience as an Ethics Consultation Coordinator is a plus but not a requirement.
- The applicant's supervisor and Facility Director **must commit** to providing the applicant with at least 0.25 FTE (average of 10 hours per week) time while completing program requirements. At least five (5) of the hours must be committed for the Fellowship sessions that will be held on Thursdays. Applicants must be eligible to have telework agreements in place for the Thursday sessions if such an agreement is needed to allow the fellow the required protected time.
- While the program officially begins in October 2016, the applicant must be available to attend the Ethics Consultation Beyond-the-Basics training scheduled for the week of August 8, 2016. The travel costs will be funded by NCEHC.
- All application documents must be submitted by the closing date: June 10, 2016.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

This is a one-year, part-time (0.25 FTE) program to be held in FY 2017 with the possible option for an additional year based on an assessment of the first year and with the agreement of the faculty and facility director.

Additional year: The additional year will focus on enhancing expert-level knowledge, skill and attitudes as an ethics consultant and an ethics educator, ethics leader and/or ethics researcher. The fellow's primary role is performing ethics consultation in his or her facility while identifying and actively developing other areas of specialization. Fellows continue to enhance their skills in conducting and writing up ethics consultations and performing ethics consultation reviews. In addition they can, as agreed, assist in policy construction, train other ethics consultants, educate staff about clinical ethics, exercise leadership in the local IntegratedEthics® program, and/or perform ethics research. The fellow's mentor and other HCEF core faculty continue to provide intensive supervision with more emphasis on leadership, education, research

and/or institutional responsibilities. The fellow will also continue to participate in selected and targeted fellowship educational activities.

In the additional year, the fellow consolidates his or her leadership function, emerging as a teacher, advisor and leader at the facility, VISN and community in VA and beyond. The fellow receives higher level mentoring and supervision to promote the highest standards of professionalism as an ethicist, and fosters integration of the previously mastered knowledge and skills.

Fellows may take on the role of ethics consultation coordinator or other leadership roles to develop ethics consultation at their facility or VISN or on a national level. Activities might include developing or participating in new educational initiatives, overseeing and taking responsibility for the professional proficiency of a cadre of local ethics consultants, contributing to policy development, and/or conducting ethics research.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

In October 2016, there will be a virtual orientation session, at which time each participant will be provided with program requirements, policies and expectations. During the orientation session, formal relationships with mentors will also be established.

The program includes skill building and activities of health care ethics as well as content blocks covering important topics and the domains of ethics in health care (Attachment 1). A sample of the rich and diverse teaching methods that will be employed over the course of each block is found in Attachment 2, and a sample block schedule in Attachment 3.

Additional Program Elements

- 1. ECPAT Assessment:** At the start of the fellowship, each participant completes an Ethics Consultation Proficiency Assessment Tool (ECPAT). In addition, one facility leader will assess the participant on relevant leadership sections of the tool, and one peer ethics consultant will complete an evaluation of the consultant using the full tool. Results of the overall assessment will be discussed individually with each participant, and will inform the development of a competency improvement plan which will serve as the focus of the consultant's work during the program.
- 2. Individual Development Plan (IDP):** Each participant in consultation with their assigned mentor prepares an IDP that will include feedback from the ECPAT Assessment. The IDP is used to identify, track, and document completion of competency-based goals of the participants. Where agreed, the IDP can include other ethics activities such as providing ethics education or leadership or conducting ethics research. The Fellowship Program Manager will approve the IDP, which will be updated or revised as needed throughout the program with consultation from the assigned mentor.
- 3. Mentoring:** Each participant will be assigned a mentor. Through their experience, proven capabilities as consultants and understanding of VA and wider ethics consultation standards and methods, mentors will assist participants in further

clarifying their developmental goals and in identifying educationally appropriate assignments and activities. Typically, participants will meet regularly (every two weeks) with their mentors and ad hoc as needed to review progress on their IDP and talk through situations related to their IDPs and facility consultation experience as needed.

4. **Ethics Consultation Beyond-the-Basics Training:** Participants are required to take the face-to-face EC Beyond-the-Basics training scheduled for the week of August 8, 2016.
5. **Ethics Consultation Developmental Assignments:** The program requires the completion/review of at least 10 consultations. Of these, some may be local consultations; others may be retrospective or assigned case or non-case reviews and/or assessment of consultations from across VHA using the Ethics Consultation Quality Tool. In addition, participants will be expected to assist on at least two (2) projects or publications (e.g., *EthicsRx* or *IE in Action*) organized by NCEHC. The purpose of the assignments is to broaden the participant's experience of domains of ethics consultation, such as research ethics or ethics at the beginning of life, that may not be encountered at the facility level, and increase the participant's knowledge of ethics consultation so that he or she is prepared for a variety of consultation experiences and responsibilities. The assignments should also challenge participants with respect to leadership/interpersonal competencies.
6. **Online Discussion Requirement:** Participants will be expected to actively participate in an online forum discussion group consisting of other program participants at least once every two weeks (with four passes available) during the year. Topics or articles related to ethics consultation may be suggested by NCEHC or proposed by the fellows. Posts are generally 200-500 words. Participants are expected to post in response to the posed question or topic as well as respond to their colleagues.
7. **Evaluation:** Participants will provide feedback/evaluate each content block.
8. **Progress Review:** Progress in meeting ECDP requirements will be closely monitored by the Mentor and Fellowship Program Manager, and will be evaluated periodically to assure timely completion of program activities.

WHEN DOES THE PROGRAM START?

The HCEFP will begin in October 2016. Applicants who are selected to participate will be notified in writing of the schedule.

FISCAL SUPPORT

NCEHC will fund the fellow's travel to the EC BtB training in August 2016. In addition, if budgetary conditions allow, NCEHC will transfer up to \$5,000 to the participant's facility for use in supporting the fellow's salary and/or travel/training needs.

INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

To learn more, call 800-767-1750, access code 89129# on one of the following dates/times to join an informational session:

- May 3, 2016 at 1 PM ET
- May 5, 2016 at 12 noon ET
- May 11, 2016 at 3 PM ET

MENTORS

David J. Alfandre, MD
Kenneth A. Berkowitz, MD, FCCP
Barbara L. Chanko, RN, MBA
Cynthia Geppert, MD, MA, MPH
Lisa Lehmann, MD, PhD
Others: to be announced

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

The application requires the submission of the following items:

- Applicant data
- Resume or CV of relevant experiences and accomplishments
- Personal statement limited to a maximum of two pages
- Two ECWeb record numbers or de-identified case consultation records for which the applicant was the primary consultant and/or main author
- Two recommendations, one from a facility leader and one from an ethics consultant
- Commitment from immediate supervisor and Facility Director to provide 0.25 FTE

A detailed description of each item is found in the Application.

WHERE WILL THE PROGRAM TAKE PLACE?

The participants will work independently at their facility and virtually with each other and NCEHC staff. Availability of Lync is essential, and video access is a plus. Budget and policy permitting, there may be opportunities for face-to-face meetings.

HOW TO APPLY

Your complete application must be sent via email to the Fellowship Program Manager by 11:59 pm EDT on the closing date of **June 10, 2016**, in order for you to be considered. Application packages should be emailed to: Barbara.Chanko@va.gov

HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED?

Our evaluation will be based on the information you provide. We may also verify performance, suitability and recommendations, and take that information into account in making selections. The applicant selection process will have multiple steps. Applicants will be notified of their status following the completion of each step of the selection process:

- Step 1: Minimum qualifications review
- Step 2: NCEHC selection panel review

- Step 3: Discussion with facility director to ensure commitment of 0.25 FTEE and at least 5 hours on Thursdays for the sessions
Step 4: Approval by the Executive Director, NCEHC

Notifications will be made by June 30, 2016.

OTHER INFORMATION

Reasonable Accommodation

NCEHC does and will provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application process should contact the Program Manager directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Equal Employment Opportunity

NCEHC does not and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor.

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION

After a participant completes the program, NCEHC will determine if the participant successfully completed all HCEFP requirements and demonstrated that he or she has developed the skills included in the ECDP and issue a certificate of completion.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM MANAGER

Barbara L. Chanko, RN, MBA

Health Care Ethicist

Email: Barbara.Chanko@va.gov

Phone: 212-951-3365

**Health Care Ethics Consultation Fellowship
Overview of Content Areas**

Topics	
Ethical theory	
Methods of ethics consultation	
Ethics-related policy	
IE program review	
Public health ethics	
Methods of ethics research	
Other (e.g., Organ Transplantation, Genomics, Boundaries for professionals and non-professionals)	
Skill Building	
CASES Approach	
Conflict resolution	
ECWeb use (entry; reports; service management)	
Educating staff about ethics	
Motivating ethical behavior	
Activities	
Observe at least one IRB meeting	
Observe at least one IE council meeting	
Domain of Ethics In Health Care	Block Duration (35 weeks total)
<i>Shared Decision Making</i>	(6 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed consent • Decisional capacity • Surrogate decision-making • Advance care planning • Limits to patient choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week
Summary/Review and Integration	• 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in End-of-Life Care</i>	(6 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CPR-DNAR</i> • <i>Life-sustaining treatments</i> • <i>Medical futility</i> • <i>Hastening death</i> • <i>Death and post-mortem issues</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week
Summary/Review and Integration	• 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices at the Beginning of Life</i>	(2 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-conception and conception • Pregnancy and perinatal period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week
<i>Patient Privacy and Confidentiality</i>	(3 weeks)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Confidentiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week

Topics	
Summary/Review and Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week
<i>Professionalism in Patient Care</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts of Interest • Truth-telling • Challenging clinical relationships with patients and families • Diverse cultural and religious perspectives • Interprofessional relationships Summary/Review and Integration	(6 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in Resource Allocation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macroallocation (Systems) • Microallocation (Individual) 	(2 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in Business & Management</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Human resources/business integrity 	(2 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in Research</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research integrity & social value • Informed consent, risks & benefits of human subjects research • Selection & recruitment of human subjects • Privacy & confidentiality in human subjects research 	(4 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week • 1 week • 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in the Everyday Workplace</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect & dignity • Ethical climate & organizational culture 	(2 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week
<i>Ethical Practices in Government Service</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government rules and laws • Other topics in government service 	(2 weeks) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week • 1 week

Sample Content Block

Domain: Shared Decision Making

Block Goal: At the end of the block, the fellow/ethics consultant will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to resolve values conflicts related to shared decision making.

Objectives:

1. Discuss shared decision making as it relates to questions and concerns that arise in ethics consultation.
2. Describe the ethical underpinning and ethics practices in VHA Handbook 1004.01, *Informed Consent for Clinical Treatments and Procedures*.
3. Describe a commonly used method of assessing decision-making capacity to make medical decisions as described in the bioethics literature.
4. Respond sensitively to ethical issues and concerns related to surrogate decision making in ethics consultation.
5. Advocate and educate about advance care planning as outlined in VHA Handbook 1004.02, *Advance Care Planning and Management of Advance Directives*.
6. Manage consultations in the domain of shared decision making, including those that involve limits to patient choice, with respect, transparency and consistency.
7. Promote shared decision making through ethics consultation and education.

Overview of Activities related to domain of Shared Decision Making:

1. Readings as assigned
2. Interactive seminars, including introduction to the domain and its topics
3. Individual case consultation write-ups of case relevant to the domain/topics and review with mentor
4. Presentation of select case write-ups to peers/faculty
5. Online discussion forums
6. Consistency check between VHA Handbook and local policy
7. Skill building / advance skills training for performing ethics consultation
8. Participate in local educational activities related to shared decision making where possible

Readings

Shared Decision Making

- Fried TR. Shared Decision Making-Finding the Sweet Spot. *N Engl J Med*. 2016; 347:104-6.

Decision-making Capacity

- *Ten Myths About Decision-Making Capacity: A Report by the National Ethics Committee of the VHA*, September 2002.
 - Lo, *Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, chs 10,11,12
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Informed Consent

- VHA Handbook 1004.01 on Informed Consent for Clinical Treatment and Procedures
- Lo, Bernard. *Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, 5th ed. ch 3
- Appelbaum, P.S. Clinical practice. Assessment of patient's competence to consent to treatment. *N Engl J. Med.* 2007;357:1834-40

Surrogate Decision Making

- National Ethics Committee Report on "Ethical Aspects of the Relationship Between Clinicians and Surrogate," April 2007
- Lo, *Resolving Ethics Dilemmas* ch 13
- Podcasts "Managing Conflicts Between Clinicians and Surrogates"

Advance Care Planning

- VHA Handbook 1004.02 on Advance Care Planning and accompanying NEC materials & podcasts
- Lo, *Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, ch 12

Limits to Patient Choice

- *Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, chs. 4, 14
 - Weijer C, Singer PA, Dickens BM, Workman S. Bioethics for Clinicians: 16: Dealing with demands for inappropriate treatment.1998. *CMAJ*; 157:817-21.
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Attachment 3

Sample Schedules Based on Duration of the Content Blocks

Time/Time Zone				Activities by Week					
PT	MT	CT	ET	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
	IDP*	IDP*	IDP*						
8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	Intro to Block	Handbook / Literature Review	Local Policy Review/ Discussion	Local Consult Work/Review	Seminar	Skill Building
9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	Seminar					
10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	Meetings w/Mentor	Seminar	Meetings w/ Mentor	Seminar	Meetings w/ Mentor	Block Integration
11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	Consult Review	Skill Building	Consult Review	Skill Building	Consult Review	Wrap up and evaluation
12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4						
IDP*	IDP*	IDP*							

Time/Time Zone				Activities by Week	
PT	MT	CT	ET	Week 1	Week 2
	IDP*	IDP*	IDP*		
8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	Intro to Block	Handbook / Literature Review
9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	Seminar	
10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	Meeting w/Mentor	Seminar
11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	Consult Review	Skill Building
12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4		
IDP*	IDP*	IDP*			

*IDP= Work on Independent Development Plan and other ethics consultation activities