

*From the Winter 2001 Newsletter*  
**A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR**

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This issue of **news@vhaethics** is devoted to the theme of Integrated Ethics Programs (IEPs) within VHA. What is an IEP? The *Best Practices* article presents an overview of the concept of IEP - a new model that applies quality improvement methods to ethical issues in health care. The article by Janice Lynch on the facing page elaborates on the IEP concept and describes a national training program that explained the concept to opinion leaders across VHA.

This issue also contains several examples of integration in action. For example, James Adams' *Legal Briefs* column discusses government ethics and how it relates to ethics in health care. The *Ethics Rounds* column is a good illustration of how ethical, policy, and legal approaches each add value to case analysis.

This is just the beginning of an ongoing dialogue about IEPs. Over the next year, the National Center will be working to create practical tools and resources to help facilities and networks apply the IEP concept to improving "ethics quality" system-wide.

Please find out more by visiting our web site, participating in our on-line discussion group, and dialing in to our hotline calls. As always, we welcome your feedback and ideas. Let us know what you think!