VA HEALTH CARE Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

IntegratedEthics In Action

Promising Practices — Emerging Champions

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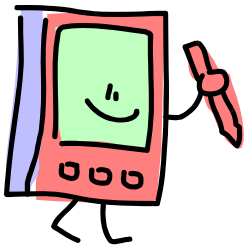
Just released online!



Ethics Consultation ♦ Preventive Ethics

Beyond the Basics Trainings

Ethics Consultation: Beyond the Basics

Ethics Consultations (EC) teams across VHA can now access a new version of the entire Ethics Consultation: Beyond the Basics (ECBB) training at http://www.ethics.va.gov/EC_Btb.asp. This six-module advanced training has undergone significant revision since it was last presented by the National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC). Its purpose is to help experienced EC teams extend the concepts outlined in the introductory primer and training video for applying the CASES approach to real-life ethical concerns. Supported by a Faculty Guide, PowerPoint slides, and Participant Handouts, the modules cover the following areas:

1. Managing Common Misconceptions About the Role of an Ethics Consultant
This module describes some of the misconceptions about what an ethics consultant does and doesn't do. By role-playing as the Consultant, the Requester, and the Observer during a mock consultation, participants practice managing and correcting these misconceptions.

2. Formulating the Ethics Question
Proceeding through five steps, this module describes how to formulate the ethics question, a critical component of ethics consultation. This process enables all consultants to focus on the central ethical concern so that they can work toward an effective solution.

3. Finding the Available Ethics Knowledge Relevant to an Ethics Question
This module presents how to find available ethics knowledge — in particular, how to use the resources available over the Internet — and provides specific suggestions for quickly identifying the most relevant ethics knowledge.

4. Generating Ethical Claims and Counterclaims
This module aims to begin to demystify the "black box" called "ethical analysis." Discussions focus on

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Preventive Ethics: Beyond the Basics

After undergoing extensive field testing and revision, the six Preventive Ethics: Beyond the Basics training modules are now available to the entire Preventive Ethics (PE) community.

Each module contains a Faculty Guide, PowerPoint slides, and Participant Handouts, which can be downloaded from http://www.ethics.va.gov/PE_Btb.asp. These training materials offer PE teams in-depth guidance on how to execute the first three steps of the ISSUES approach to ethics quality improvement: Identify an Issue, Study the Issue, and Select a Strategy. Specific topics covered include:

1. **Determining Whether an Issue is Right for the ISSUES Approach**
2. **Prioritizing among Ethics Issues**
3. **Describing Best Ethics Practice**
4. **Describing Current Ethics Practice**
5. **Developing a Refined Improvement Goal** (that clearly reflects the ethics quality gap between best and current ethics practice)
6. **Identifying Change Strategies to Address an Ethics Quality Gap** (by analyzing the ethics quality gap's root causes)

The Faculty Guides provide PE Coordinators with step-by-step instructions for conducting in-depth trainings with their teams at facilities or network offices. The Participant Handouts include exercises and many other useful references, such as an enhanced PE Tracking Log that gives instructions for recording issues that are brought to a PE team, applying specific criteria for determining their appropriateness for an ISSUES cycle, and prioritizing the PE team's work. During the training, participants are shown how to complete a PE storyboard using the outlined process.

"Participating in the PE Beyond the Basics training allowed me to refine my skills in the use of each element of the ISSUES cycle process that resulted in the timely and efficient resolution of ethics quality gaps," said Laura McDonald, BSN, MS, RN, PE Coordinator at VA Boston Healthcare System. "The knowledge gained in the application of the PE process has honed my skills in maintaining our PE team's focus on the goal, selecting successful strategies and tools to overcome barriers, and providing the means to assess the efficacy of selected strategies."

The modules can accommodate several learning formats. Thus, PE teams can complete the modules in groups through a face-to-face conference or lecture series in which the modules are presented sequentially, or individually in a self-paced self-study course.

For questions or assistance, contact Robin Cook at Robin.Cook@va.gov.

IE Teams Lead Facility Efforts to Make National Health Care Decisions Day a Success Across VHA

On April 16, IntegratedEthics team members partnered with Social Work, Palliative Care, and other services to successfully promote National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) at VHA. The aim of this sixth annual national event was to inspire, educate, and empower patients and family members about the importance of advance care planning. A collaboration of national, state, and community organizations, NHDD was developed to ensure that all adults with decision-making capacity have the information and opportunity to document their preferences and values surrounding their health care.

For NHDD this year, VHA teams set up information tables in well-traveled lobbies at their facilities and offered Veterans and their family members opportunities to ask questions and complete advance directives. Examples of material disseminated include VA and state advance directive forms and VA's "What You Need to Know" handout. Other materials contained information on organ/body donation, Do Not Attempt Resuscitation orders, Veterans' post-mortem benefits, and each facility's ethics consultation service. At many facilities, such as West Palm Beach VA Medical Center (VAMC) and the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (North Chicago), Veterans could fill out advance directives on the spot. Private areas with computers facilitated private discussions. Social Work staff members were available to serve as witnesses for completed advance directives and scan them into the Computerized Patient Record System.

"Many Veterans obtained literature, asked questions, and obtained an advance directive at our display table," said Bob Smith from the Social Work service at Martinsburg (WV) VAMC. "Some had expressed they were familiar with advance directives, but had not realized the importance of having one before today." Sherry Butts, Preventive Ethics (PE) Coordinator, was the prime organizer of the event.

When it came to publicizing NHDD, some facilities got creative. "Our Social Work Fellows, Interns, and Social Work Associates donned a sandwich board and walked through the hospital and clinical waiting rooms," said Betty Beck, LCSW, Social Work Service Student Education and Palliative Care Coordinator at South Texas Veterans Health Care System. Social workers at San Diego VAMC wheeled a cart with advance directive information around the hospital and handed out forms to interested patients in halls and waiting rooms.

During the weeks prior to NHDD, Tomah (WI) VAMC sent out daily briefing notes about the event to staff and inserted information about advance directives into outgoing prescriptions. At the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, the PE team authored an article on the importance of advance care planning in the facility newspaper, and the Public Affairs and Medical Media offices at Milwaukee VAMC disseminated messages about NHDD events.

"Having the event listed in the local newpaper's Community Events calendar was extremely helpful," explained Jennifer Blakely, Esq., IE Program Officer at Erie (PA) VAMC. "A number of family members saw the notice and brought their Veterans to our panel discussion to encourage them to complete their advance directive."

What did NHDD teams learn from the process? "Utilizing creative ways to educate people reduced their anxiety surrounding these difficult decisions," said Ms. Beck. "In 2014, we are considering spreading these messages to wider audiences at our outlying clinics and in other disciplines, and continue the creative, artistic flow." At the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, PE Coordinator Michelle Franklin and her team also plan to include activities for off-shift staff, and to extend presentations to the community-based outpatient clinics through site visits and videoconferences. Other facilities, such as West Palm Beach and Canandaigua, are considering hosting similar events quarterly or monthly.

Motivated by its success in educating Veterans and families on NHDD, the team at Canandaigua VAMC wasted no time: they hosted a lunch-and-learn session on advance directives for employees a couple of weeks later during Compliance and Ethics Week.

NCEHC thanks all facilities that submitted information and photographs on their NHDD activities.

Eric Smith, LMSW, Palliative Care Social Work Fellow at South Texas Veterans Health Care System, walked throughout the facility answering questions above advance directives. Above, he discusses strategy with Lindsey Higginson, MSW, Intern.

Ethics Consultation: Beyond the Basics Training

(Continued from page 1)

how to identify different types of ethical claims and counterclaims that are critical for performing high-quality ethical analysis — and why it is important to be able to distinguish them. Participants also learn how to develop effective claims and counterclaims in each category.

5. Strengthening Ethical Claims
This module continues the work to develop ethical claims and counterclaims by discussing what makes any ethical claim strong (or weak), and how to strengthen ethical claims by *clarifying* them and *making them more compelling*. To fully understand this content, Module 4 should be completed before starting this module.

6. Getting Off to the Right Start in a Formal Ethics Consultation Meeting
This module presents tools and techniques for starting a formal ethics consultation meeting in ways that support the consultant's responsibility to manage interpersonal dynamics and achieve the objectives of the meeting. Participants learn how to create a brief "elevator" speech that describes their role as an ethics consultant.

The Faculty Guides provide step-by-step instructions for presenting the modules, and EC teams can use several approaches for delivering the content at their facilities or networks, including a face-to-face conference (for which the modules were originally designed and tested), an ongoing lecture series where the modules are presented sequentially, or a self-paced self-study course.

The NCEHC will hold a face-to-face ECBB training featuring these materials on August 7-8, 2013, in Phoenix, AZ. All six modules will be presented. Travel support will be provided for two experienced ethics consultants from each VISN.

The modules are expected to undergo further revision and NCEHC welcomes feedback, suggestions, or constructive criticism based on field use experience.

For questions or assistance, contact David Alfandre, MD, at David.Alfandre@va.gov.

"I Have a Deep Passion to Make a Difference to People Every Day": IE Program Champion Douglas B. Sloan

Douglas B. Sloan, MS, VHA-CM, *is the former (and first) Preventive Ethics Coordinator at Louisville VA Medical Center.*

How did you first become interested in ethics?
My experiences as an Army Medical Department Patient Administrator and Investigator for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) created a deep passion to make a difference and add value to people every day in the area of organizational health. I have always wanted to explain the "why" behind the "what," and have noted that when leaders use their influence to model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and engage the heart, the impact builds across the organization. I have always enjoyed facilitating conversations about what should be done in the face of uncertainty or conflict about values.

Why did you become involved with the IntegratedEthics (IE) program?
After joining VHA in 2007, I immediately learned about the IE program and quickly volunteered to serve in any capacity to advance the efforts of the VHA IE team to "make it easy to do the right thing." I gladly took on this additional responsibility and honor to serve on a team of like-minded individuals focused on fostering a strong ethical environment and facilitating strong ethical practices throughout the facility. I couldn't think of a better way to serve our facility and patients than to help promote health care practices consistent with high ethical standards, resolve conflict in an atmosphere of respect, and educate staff and patients to handle current and future ethical concerns.

What is your current IE role? What other, if any, roles have you held?
I have served as the Preventive Ethics Coordinator since the inception of the program in 2007. I just recently passed the baton to Chaplain David Graetz, another charter member who has served as a member of the Ethics Consultation Team.

Regarding your VISN IE program, what is your proudest moment?
One of our proudest moments was to develop our VISN IE Advisory Committee. This committee immediately added value by providing essential stability for the IE program across the VISN so that it could withstand the turbulence of a rapidly changing environment. On a local level, a highlight was our annual Ethics/Compliance/Privacy Fair. Each year we would engage approximately 200 staff members in fun, energetic learning activities. Through this collaboration with Compliance and Privacy, we demonstrated that organizational health programs could work together to "make it easy to do the right thing."

What challenges have you faced in implementing IE at your facility? How did you overcome them?
Without a doubt the greatest challenge has been to sustain momentum. Faced with rapid staff turnover and competing priorities, I worked hard to surround myself with "can-do" people who had contagious, unstoppable energy to do whatever it takes to tirelessly promote strong ethical practices throughout the facility. They would do this by first modeling the way and then creatively engaging others in learning opportunities. I learned quickly that building a close inner circle of like-minded individuals and influential staff members is absolutely essential.

How did you work with leadership to obtain resources to devote to the IE program?
The Louisville VAMC leadership team has been extremely supportive and appreciative of our efforts to foster strong ethical practices throughout the facility. By working closely with our IE Council and facility Director, we have developed creative ways to demonstrate our resolve to improve our ethical environment. One of the most memorable is the "Wheel of Knowledge," which is patterned after the "Wheel of Fortune," and features ethics-related questions and fun tokens of appreciation. Leadership further demonstrated their support by allowing me to facilitate the VISN 9 Leadership Institute IE curriculum. For the past four years, I have written, designed, implemented, and taught the curriculum to this leadership group.

Overall, what has your program accomplished? How has it contributed to the improvement of ethics quality at your facility?
The greatest compliment we receive as an IE team happens when we observe staff and leaders discussing the ethical implications of a course of action without even asking the IE team to facilitate. Ethics is now a normal part of most discussions; it is no longer a side conversation. I recently asked a dozen staff members attending a leadership course how many had discussed ethics within the past year with either their supervisor or a staff member. Nine raised their hands. I have asked this question for the past seven years and now over 75% are responding positively — up from less than 10% when we started!

Do you have any other thoughts to share with our readers?
I encourage IE leaders to stay engaged and surround themselves with like-minded individuals who have the passion to foster strong ethical practices throughout the facility. The Law of Magnetism will work if you give it long enough. As you cannot give what you do not have, continue to build your own skill set. Don't waste precious energy complaining about what you don't have. Instead, create what you want, and "be the change you want to see." There is nothing more powerful than seizing the opportunity every day to be a positive influence and spread joy. Stay engaged and always remember: "If not you…who?" In the words of legendary coach John Wooden, "Make each day your masterpiece."

*What We're Reading. . .*Ethics in the Literature

Here are a couple of articles that were of recent interest to our NCEHC IE Staff. They can be used to spark engagement in your local IE program or to discuss in local journal clubs. To receive copies, consult your facility's librarian.

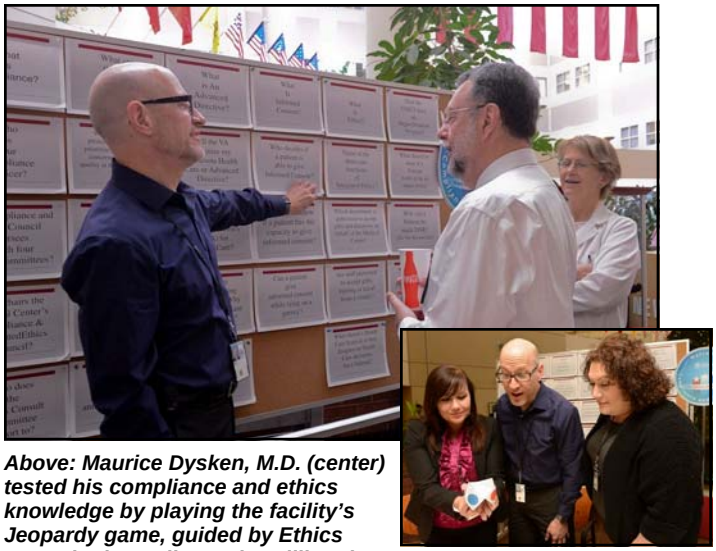
Gilmore, T. A., Shea, G. P., Useem, M. (1997). Side Effects of Corporate Cultural Transformations. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 33(2), 174-189. Article discusses four leading side effects of organizational culture change initiatives (ambivalent authority, polarized images, disappointment and blame, and behavioral inversion). When managers openly discuss these unwanted side effects, cultural transformations generate fewer of these negative outcomes.

Rivard, P. E., Parker, V. A., Rosen, A. K. (2013). Quality Improvement for Patient Safety: Project-level versus Program-level learning. Health Care Management Review, 38(1), 40-50. Article discusses what's necessary to move from project–level improvement learning to an overall organizational approach that benefits from all quality improvement projects.

C&E Week Highlights from the Field

The activities and photos featured on these two pages are just a few of those reported by enthusiastic IE and CBI teams across VHA. The NCEHC thanks everyone who shared C&E Week activities; your efforts to promote and spread IE are most appreciated!

Minneapolis VA Health Care System. . .



Above: Maurice Dysken, M.D. (center) tested his compliance and ethics knowledge by playing the facility's Jeopardy game, guided by Ethics Consultation Fellow John Billig, Ph.D. Ethics Consultation Chair Melissa West, M.D., looks on. At right: Staff members Angela Chudzik, John Billig, and Dawn Strojny try out a hand-held compliance game at the information booth.

VHA Office of Compliance and Business Integrity and the National Center for Ethics in Health Care (Washington D.C.). . .

Samantha Twigg, MSW, LICSW, MBE, Ethics Policy Specialist, and Jonathan E. Ludwig, Education and Communications Program Specialist, promoted awareness about C&E week and about the activities of their respective offices, NCEHC and CBI.

- ★ The C&E Week team at VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System visited the Pueblo and Colorado Springs community-based outpatient clinics and talked with staff about C&E Week events, and ways to reach members of the IE program. They also discussed the new Ethics Liaison Committee, which is composed of front-line staff members who are interested in learning more about ethics and how to address ethical concerns in the course of their jobs. The committee plans to sponsor educational sessions and eventually grand rounds led by front-line staff.
- ★ The Hampton VA Medical Center set up an attractive table dedicated to Advance Directives (AD) in the canteen area. Members of the Preventive Ethics team gave out free candy and asked visitors to fill out a quick survey about whether they had an AD. Throughout the week, they held meaningful conversations with staff and Veterans about their fears and misperceptions surrounding ADs, and when one should be implemented.
- ★ The Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center (Houston, TX) focused on ethical concerns that had arisen for staff in the context of discussing clinical issues. The team met with over 200 Veterans and their families to discuss end-of-life decisions. A session on transgender patients provided staff with the opportunity to discuss issues surrounding the provision of care and other concerns that affect this population. Because attendees commented that they learned a lot and would appreciate more sessions on these topics, the C&E Week team will be meeting soon to establish a more formalized educational forum for ethics at the facility that offers continuing education credit.
- ★ North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System held a poetry contest for all employees. The poems had to deal with values related to ethics and compliance, and entrants were invited to visit the IE web page for ideas. They also posted 10 values on a large poster and participants were asked to respond to questions relating to the value that interested them the most.

VHA Celebrates. . .

COMPLIANCE & ETHICS WEEK 2013

- At VA North Texas Health Care System, Padmashri Rastogi, M.D., and other speakers hosted the third annual Ethics Symposium for Veterans. Topics included how and why Veterans could request an ethics consult, the meaning of informed consent, do-not-attempt-resuscitation orders (DNAR), surrogate decision making and naming a medical power of attorney, and the management of chronic pain. Throughout the event, Veterans were encouraged to ask questions.
- The Director and Quad members at Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center (Saginaw, MI) sent daily messages that related to I CARE values. These "Value of the Day" activities were developed by NCEHC for C&E Week. For example, Monday's message was "Integrity" and related questions were: What actions have you seen in your facility that demonstrate integrity? Are there times when "acting with high moral principle" or "adhering to the highest professional standards" seems to conflict with other values? If so, how do you address the conflict in yourself or with other people? They also used the occasion to launch Ethics Rounds.
- James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital (Tampa, FL) hosted lunch-and-learns, including "Respect: To Get It You Must Give It," a program that focused on modeling ethics and respect in the workplace. The keynote speech discussed ways to ensure that a culture of integrity is maintained and identified the benefits of a strong culture of integrity. The Deputy Director awarded Certificates of Appreciation to members of the IE Council and CBI Committee for their participation and partnership in upholding Compliance and Ethics throughout the facility.
- St. Cloud VA Health Care System distributed results from the IntegratedEthics Staff Survey on a PowerPoint presentation for Supervisors to share with their employees. The week's festivities concluded with an "Ethics Sundae Social" that was hosted by the Ethics Consultation and Preventive Ethics workgroups and CBI Committee.

Amarillo VA Health Care System. . .

Amarillo Mayor Paul Harpole addresses an attentive crowd at a C&E program. Other facility events included an ethics consultation scavenger hut that involved searching the IE section of NCEHC's Web site for answers to specific questions, such as, "What is the name of the IntegratedEthics newsletter?"

Beckley VA Medical Center. . .

Before making an appearance at the cookie bar, "Ask Ethel" (aka employee Tracy Meadows, R.N.) answered ethics-related questions. Other highlights included an ethics crossword puzzle contest.

Augusta VA Medical Center. . .

Upper right: Ethics Consultant Denise Evans, M.D., enjoys the special C&E Week cake after presenting on clinical ethics. At left: Tracey D. Brunson, Compliance and Business Integrity Officer; Ed Shepherd, VISN 7 Network Manager; and C&E Week Facilitator Theresa Wells discuss details for broadcasting C&E Week activities to the facility's remote sites.

IntegratedEthics
Improving Ethics Quality in Health Care

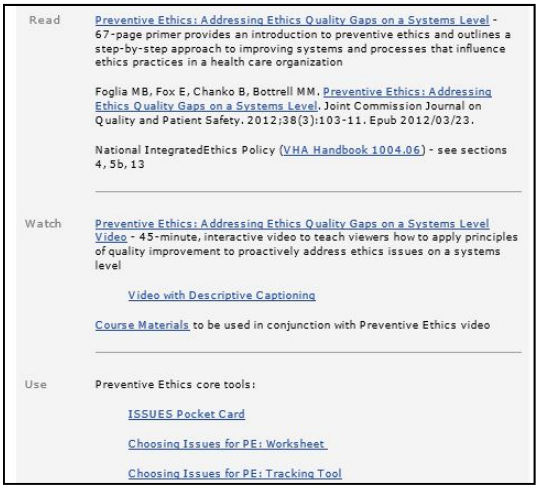
Redesigned IntegratedEthics Websites Go Live

IntegratedEthics (IE) now offers its online visitors newly designed websites on both the Internet (http://www.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics/index.asp) and Intranet (http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics/index.asp). The first-tier pages of these sites, which went live in May and June respectively, represent their first significant revision in more than six years.

A new horizontal navigation bar gives users quick access to each of the major sections of the IE program, including three new pages focused on program management, ethics education, and evaluation. The new design features content that has been organized in a consistent way across all IE pages. Improvements include refreshed language and more accurate titles and descriptions of the resources listed on each page.

The pages also feature a new fixed right-hand column for frequently used resources, quick links, and IE news. While both websites look very similar, it is important for users to note that the Intranet version features additional resources, such as summaries of past Improvement Forum (IF) calls, access to IntegratedEthics in *Action* (IEIA), and program links and materials intended for, and relevant only to, VHA staff. For example, on the Intranet site, the column includes quick links to the latest issue of IEIA, IF calls and schedule, IE listserv sign-up, facility and VISN IE SharePoint sites, and key IE personnel by VISN and facility.

The new IE education page. The right-hand column appears on all pages and provides links to frequently used resources. (Intranet version shown)



The resources panel for Preventive Ethics (segment).

The IE page redesign is part of the larger VA-wide web renovation that is occurring across facilities and program offices this summer.

Jamie Philpotts, NCEHC Technical Writer/Editor, led the redesign effort, including analysis and research, design proposals, and creation of the new pages. She worked closely with Special Projects Chief Jill Lowery on development and with IE Chief Melissa Bottrell on content updates.

"I hope these pages offer an improved, more intuitive, and accessible experience for people who use the IE web pages," said Ms. Philpotts.

Ms. Philpotts is seeking feedback from visitors. Comments can be e-mailed directly by using the link to the webmaster at the bottom of the pages. There also is a plan to survey IE team members when all website revisions are completed. For questions or comments, contact Jamie.Philpotts@va.gov.

Facility Workbook Analysis Tool Released

A new analysis tool is now available to assist facilities in using the IE Facility Workbook (IEFW) more effectively. The IntegratedEthics Facility Workbook Analysis Tool enables IE teams to summarize IE program strengths and weaknesses, prioritize among improvement opportunities, and select a limited list of items in each IEFW section to address during the year. The compact summary form helps facilities to share IEFW results with leadership, thereby promoting ethics program accountability and leadership connections.

The Analysis Tool, adapted from a tool originally developed by the IE team at South Texas Veterans Health Care System, was recently showcased in an *AJOB Primary Research* article, "The IntegratedEthics™ Facility Workbook: An Evaluation Tool to Support Health Care Ethics Program Implementation and Quality Management." (http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21507716.2012.751465)

The new tool link is located at the bottom of the IE Facility Workbook webpage: http://vaww.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics/workbook.asp. Contact Basil M. Rowland, MSW, with questions at (757) 809-1129 or Basil.Rowland@va.gov.

Michael Lawson Wins 2012 William A. Nelson Award for Excellence in Health Care Ethics

Ellen Fox, MD, Chief Ethics in Health Care Officer, presents the 2012 Nelson Award to Michael M. Lawson, former Director, VA Boston Health Care System.

Michael M. Lawson, former Director of the VA Boston Health Care System, has been awarded the 2012 William A. Nelson Award for Health Care Ethics. Ellen Fox, MD, Chief Ethics in Health Care Officer, presented the award on April 25.

"Mr. Lawson is a man whose 30-year government career exemplifies the highest standards of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment in health care ethics," said Dr. Fox. "Mr. Lawson has proven himself a leader in health care ethics by epitomizing the excellence, dedication, and accomplishment that the Nelson Award celebrates."

Under Mr. Lawson's leadership, the VA Boston Healthcare System is recognized as among the very best medical centers in VA — in quality of care, patient satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and value. He successfully led the complex and challenging merger of two separate medical centers with very distinct cultures, the Brockton-West Roxbury Medical Center and Boston VA and outpatient clinics. One colleague who worked with him on that merger recounts, "When confronting problems during those turbulent times, he'd often help by asking what the right thing to do was. By this, he meant right for the patients, right for the employees, and right for the future of the consolidated institution as a whole."

As director of the consolidated VA Boston Healthcare System, Mr. Lawson founded and led one of the first IntegratedEthics committees in the VA system. He chaired the VISN 1 Ethics Committee for many years and championed a Network Ethics Summit with the goal of assisting all facilities in the VISN in implementing their own ethics programs. He established Ethics Rounds and a strong Preventive Ethics program, and has continually led initiatives in ongoing ethics education for his staff. He appears in NCEHC's introductory video for IntegratedEthics in which he stated: "Ethics is not a fad. It is not the 'issue du jour.' It's something I believe is at the core of any organization that wants to take itself seriously. And we are in a serious business."

The annual Nelson Award was established in 2005 to recognize VHA employees whose careers exhibit the highest standards of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment in the field of health care ethics. The award honors Chaplain William A. Nelson, MDiv, PhD, who worked for 30 years to promote ethical health care practice throughout VHA.

For further information, visit http://www.ethics.va.gov/activities/Nelson.asp or contact Steven Spickler at 202-461-4102 or at steven.spickler@va.gov.

Recent Publications from NCEHC Leadership

Ellen Fox, MD, Chief Ethics in Health Care Officer, was featured in the article, "VA Tries Quality Improvement Approach to Medical Ethics," published May 2013 in *American Medical News*: http://www.amednews.com/article/20130520/profession/130529976/4/

Melissa Bottrell, MPH, PhD, Chief, IntegratedEthics, published the article, "Ethics Quality Helps Build Healthy Organizations" in the Summer 2013 edition of *Organizational Health*, a quarterly VHA newsletter dedicated to building and sustaining satisfying, productive work environments across VHA: http://vaww.ees.lrn.va.gov/We_Tracker/We_Track.asp?LINK=3739.

More information on this topic can be found in the article, "Perceptions of Ethical Leadership and the Ethical Environment and Culture: IntegratedEthics Staff Survey Data from the VA Health Care System," by Mary Beth Foglia, RN, PhD, Manager, Preventive Ethics, and colleagues that was recently published in *AJOB Primary Research*: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21507716.2012.751070#.UciraeDR3zI

Decision Exercise Augments EL Triage Tool

A Decision Exercise that pairs with the Triage Tool for Ethics-Related Leadership Decisions has just been released. The Triage Tool can assist leaders in identifying helpful resources and best approaches for making ethics-related decisions. The tool is available at: http://www.ethics.va.gov/docs/integratedethics/pg_2_only_EL_Triage_Tool.pdf.

The new Decision Exercise has been created to help leaders practice using the full Triage Tool and includes case examples as well as an answer key. It is available at http://www.ethics.va.gov/docs/integratedethics/el_decision_exercise_triage_tool_qa_2013516.pdf.

Please contact Beth Ritter, MBA, at beth.ritter@va.gov with any questions.

National Center for ETHICS in Health Care

Developed by the IntegratedEthics team at the National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC), IntegratedEthics *in Action* is published on the IE Website vaww.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics/IEaction.asp, listserv, and via other IE venues. Its purpose is to rapidly disseminate promising practices and feature emerging IE champions to help facilities and VISNs in their implementation of the IE initiative. We welcome your comments and suggestions for topics to: vhaethics@va.gov.

IntegratedEthics
Improving Ethics Quality in Health Care