

CAEP Bioethics Committee
Annual Report – May 2021

This last year has been challenging for everyone. There has been no shortage of ethical and professional issues for the CAEP Bioethics Committee and its members to reflect on and respond to. The pandemic has provided numerous opportunities – on a local and national level – for members of the Bioethics Committee to offer their expertise and contribute to the academic discourse.

A number of articles were published in CJEM early in the pandemic focusing on such issues as triage of critical care when resources are scarce, and the duty to care as it relates to physician safety:

Pauls MA, Migneault D, Bakewell F. Ethical considerations in the allocation of critical care resources when capacity is overwhelmed. CJEM. 2020 Jul;22(4):404-406. doi: 10.1017/cem.2020.354. PMID: 32223773; PMCID: PMC7156547.

Bakewell F, Pauls MA, Migneault D. Ethical considerations of the duty to care and physician safety in the COVID-19 pandemic. CJEM. 2020 Jul;22(4):407-410. doi: 10.1017/cem.2020.376. PMID: 32326998; PMCID: PMC7211799.

This work led to numerous appearances in the national media and multiple presentations at CAEP national grand rounds. The first Grand Rounds was in April 2020 and the topics presented included triage protocols, duty to care, and goals of care discussions. The second was in Feb 2021 and explored vaccination ethics.

The CAEP Bioethics Committee continues to serve as a sounding board for the CAEP board, reviewing policies that may have an ethical component to them and also providing a response to material or policies that associated medical organizations ask CAEP to review. Committee members also take questions from, and act as a resource for other CAEP members regarding ethical and professional questions that arise in their practice - either clinically or in the development of policy.

We have incurred no expenses in the past year and don't anticipate significant expenses in the coming year. Members of the CAEP Bioethics Committee continue to be available to assist other committees and other CAEP members if questions or projects arise that relate to bioethics and professionalism in Emergency Medicine.

Respectfully submitted,

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