

Addressing & Mitigating Bias in Volunteer-Based Healthcare Ethics Consultation (HEC)

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Presence of Bias in HEC

Standards for cultivating awareness of bias for healthcare ethics consultants

- *ASBH Core Competencies*: “...attributes can help consultants acknowledge possible areas of conflict between their personal moral view and interests and their role in conducting consultation” (p. 32).
- *CHA Striving for Excellence in Ethics (SEE)*: “Demonstrates respect for all, including those with different points of view; ability to be objective with an awareness of one’s biases; is able to set appropriate boundaries; maintains confidentiality” (p. 47).

Problems if bias permeates HEC or Ethics Committees

- **Credibility**: Impacts trust in competency
- **Integrity**: Impacts objective moral analysis
- **Reputation**: Impacts whether the service is viewed as supportive/helpful

*If any of these qualities is in question, healthcare professionals are less likely to request consultation or guidance.

What to do about it?

Potential Solutions

- Encourage ongoing personal/professional formation
- Role-modeling & mentoring
- Mindfulness training--Teaching how to call out one's own bias

Next Steps

- Collaboration with colleagues in Formation to develop formational training/programs specifically for Ethics Committees
- Integrate ongoing formation in Ethics Committees, orientation & consultation