

## Oh, The Places We Will Go

2019 is shaping up to be a big year for CPMC. The Mission Bernal Campus opened in August, and patients will move to the new Van Ness Campus in March. Along with new facilities, the new year will bring challenges and opportunities to all Sutter Bay Area hospitals we serve. The Program in Medicine and Human Values is eager to face these situations with our customary vigor and creativity.

The challenges include opening a major health care facility in the heart of San Francisco during an opioid crisis. Providing quality medical care to San Francisco's less fortunate is as important as the technologic wonders we provide to the well insured and affluent. Inevitably, the advances in technology often result in even more impersonal care. Patients unfortunate enough to need hospitalization find that things have changed. Your beloved personal physician is unavailable and you are surrounded by competent, caring, but unknown doctors who are making medical decisions that affect you. Our ethics consultation service is helping patients and their families engage with their new physicians in shared decision-making. This is the first step toward establishing a trusting doctor-patient relationship.

The opportunities are as daunting as they are promising. Our ethics consultation service is a well-established program, recognized internationally for its work in clinical ethics. Success in one arena invites growth in complementary directions. Our greatest need is to find the resources to respond to the numerous requests for ethics education programs. This year we have provided over sixty education events to physicians, nurses, other health professionals, ethics committee members, and the public. We are using many teaching formats including traditional lectures, small group workshops and video conferencing. The multiple fellowship and residency training programs at CPMC and Sutter Santa Rosa are asking for our help to develop an ethics component in their

curriculum. We continue to offer our clinical ethics fellowship, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, and given our successes, we routinely attract highly qualified candidates. Philanthropy plays a key role in funding elements of these projects. Your support assists our program in meeting the education demands from providers who may be caring for you one day.

A second area that needs attention is the problem of burnout and disengagement that is becoming an epidemic among health professionals. An internet survey published by Medscape reports 42% of America's physicians described themselves as "burned out." At Sutter Health, we are committed to addressing this issue before it becomes a larger problem. Reinvigorating our provider community starts by engaging them in the process of establishing a clear understanding of their values, obligations and the benefits of their profession. Our early efforts here are promising.

Finally, our work with the End of Life Option Act makes it clear we have the opportunity to be a catalyst in a larger public discussion about medical care in America. Whether about healthcare funding, disparities in care, or the personal issues arising from illness and approaching death, our society is ill-informed and, sadly, naive. Our newsletter *Ethical Times* is one effort toward this but we can do more to bring understanding to the complex choices facing our patients.

All of these activities depend on donor support. Your contributions over the past 15 years have made the ethics consultation service a sustainable enterprise that provides immeasurable value to patients in Sutter hospitals. I am now asking you to continue your support as we tackle new challenges and opportunities in the years ahead.



William S. Andereck, M.D., FACP



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# Where, Oh Where Have Our Doctors Gone?



**T**he practice of medicine grows ever more complex and the pace of healthcare delivery is accelerating, leaving healthcare providers to face increasing stress that can lead to burnout. Feelings of exhaustion and cynicism, specifically related to circumstances in the workplace, is chasing competent physicians out of practice and leading to early retirement for many.

Neurology and Psychiatry are among the most challenging and dynamic specialties in medicine. It is not surprising that these physicians face the same challenges of burnout experienced by specialists in every area of medicine. A study published in *Neurology*<sup>1</sup> reported that six out of 10 member neurologists of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) described some symptoms of burnout.

Causes of burnout among healthcare professionals are multifaceted. High among them are changes in the environment of healthcare over the past decade that has led to depersonalized patient care. “What keeps me going is the sense of service” comments one neurologist responding to the AAN survey.

Given the complex causes of provider burnout, it is unlikely there is a simple or one-size-fits-all answer. However, reducing stress by helping providers grapple with the complex ethical issues that are part of caring for neurologically compromised patients is clearly part of the solution. PMHV’s *Clinical Neuroethics Initiative* is working directly with physicians and nurses to mitigate this burnout and promote well-being. At the same time, we are exploring organizational efforts to address the issue more comprehensively.

As 2018 comes to a close, we’ve invited colleagues dealing with neurological and psychiatric patients to comment on the impact of the *Clinical Neuroethics Initiative* in helping to reduce physician distress and improve quality of care.

(1) Busis NA, Shanafelt TD, Keran CM et al. Burnout, career satisfaction, and well-being among US neurologists in 2016. *Neurology*.2017; 88(8):797-808.

**H. Paul Chin, M.D.**

Inpatient Psychiatry Unit, CPMC

“The neuroethics experts participate in our case discussions and offer their point of view, which is refreshing and extremely helpful. This perspective allows us to stand back and take stock of what we are doing every day. It helps us get our heads out of the weeds, consider the big picture and reflect on the situation more intellectually.”



**Scott Rome, M.D.**

Director, Regional Rehabilitation Center, CPMC

“It is a wonderful asset for my staff to have access to PHMV’s neuroethics program. The ability to have someone as knowledgeable as the neuroethicists to discuss many of the complex and difficult decisions we make with patients in rehabilitation is a unique and important service. It has a substantial impact on the quality of care we provide our patients. Additionally, the PMHV team has proven quite valuable in helping our staff deal with their own caregiver distress, and I want to thank them for the extraordinary job they are doing.”



**Alan Newman, M.D.**

Chair, Department of Psychiatry, CPMC

“As medicine has become increasingly focused on billable encounters, corporate policies, and electronic medical records, physicians increasingly despair at the loss of the qualities that made medicine initially appealing to them. Working with the neuroethicist has brought back much of the curiosity about the human condition and the human mind that attracted me to the field of Psychiatry. I find the *Clinical Neuroethics Initiative* support invaluable in helping us step back and think about human suffering and our role as physicians in a way that the modern healthcare system is struggling to maintain.”



**Charlene Chen, M.D.**

Neurologist, Neurocritical Care and Vascular Neurology, CPMC

“The neuroethics program support for staff and physicians is vitally important. Due to disabling brain conditions, the patients we see often do not have a voice, or they are sometimes very young with compromised futures. The clinical dilemmas we face take a toll on us as physicians. We go home at night and think what we might have done differently for the patient. Having the neuroethicist there, talking to the families and helping to mediate and resolve those conflicts is invaluable.”





**Suzann Samet, R.N., BSN**

Manager, Clinical Nursing,  
Stroke ICU, CPMC



“Nurses in the Neuro ICU are under a great deal of stress. We are dealing with critical situations and it is often unclear which treatment will be in the patient’s best interest.

Being able to speak to, and be heard by, the neuroethicist gives us an objective and unbiased perspective that would otherwise be missing. Addressing our frustrations is also helpful in combating feelings of burnout.”

**Alan Yee, D.O.**

Neurologist, Stroke and Critical  
Care Neurology, UC Davis



“Emotional exhaustion, inadequate support staff, and excessive workload are strongly associated with the high prevalence of physician burnout, particularly those practicing within the neurologic specialties. As a practicing stroke and critical care neurologist, the stakes for patients’ recovery are high. Having the clinical neuroethics service accessible improves upon the aforementioned variables. It also reduces emotional exhaustion and workload by incorporating the ethics service line expertise during complex caregiver discussions, and providing clinicians with appropriate ethics-based tools for optimal decision making. The Clinical Neuroethics Initiative at CPMC is a unique, one-of-a-kind program that has filled a void in clinical practice and provides a strong supportive role for busy healthcare providers who care for the neurocritically ill.”

# Welcome and Introductions



**Shaylona Kirk, M.D.**, is the Program for Medicine and Human Values' Clinical Ethics Fellow for 2018-2019. Dr. Kirk is a physician with master's degrees in Biomedical and Health Ethics and Public Health. Her experiences serving on a hospital ethics committee during medical school inspired her to pursue further education in bioethics prior to starting her residency. During graduate school, she worked for the Arizona Bioethics Network as a researcher, consultant, and educator. Before joining PMHV, Dr. Kirk worked as a preventive medicine physician and also as expert faculty for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Simultaneously, her participation in conducting ethics educational seminars and serving as an ethics consultant allowed her to take a leadership role in the development and implementation of ethics policy for the Health First Hospital System in Florida. Her interests include preventive ethics, bioethics education for medical students, residents, and other healthcare providers, public health ethics, and improved patient-centered communication.

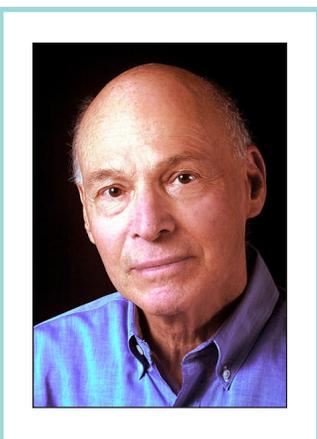
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**Elizabeth Sheffield, J.D., DNAP**, is the Program in Medicine and Human Values' Clinical Ethics Specialist for 2018-2019. Dr. Sheffield has education and experience in both law and healthcare. She is licensed to practice law in California. Her legal experience includes hospital risk management and she previously practiced as a medical malpractice insurance defense attorney. She continues to work for Kaiser Permanente as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. Most recently, she obtained her doctorate of nurse anesthesia practice from Virginia Commonwealth University where she discovered a renewed interest in ethics and feels very fortunate to be part of PMHV's Team. In 2018, she completed a Master of Arts in Bioethics from Ohio State University. Dr. Sheffield is interested in moral distress in healthcare professionals, specifically nurses and advanced practice nurses. In addition to her bioethics training, she also teaches legal issues and ethics at Missouri State University and the University of Southern California. She lectures nationally about legal issues that affect healthcare providers.

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## *In Memoriam* | *Lawrence J. Schneiderman, M.D.*



Our good friend and colleague, Lawrence J. Schneiderman, M.D., a long-time contributor to the field of bioethics, died August 8 at his home in Del Mar. He was 86. A graduate of Harvard Medical School, he was professor emeritus in the departments of Family Medicine and Public Health and Medicine at University of California, San Diego. He regularly visited our Program as a Visiting Scholar and collaborated with Dr. Andereck on a research project to study the outcome of ethics interventions in the ICU. Dr. Jonsen co-authored with Larry a seminal article that has stimulated decades of scholarly debate over medical futility.

Dr. Schneiderman was also a published novelist, playwright and author of numerous anthologized short stories. His awards and recognitions spanned his diverse interests, from the 2007 Pellegrino Medal in Medical Ethics to the 1981 Drama-Logue Award for Distinguished Playwriting. His name appeared in both *American Men and Women of Science* and *American Poets and Writers*.

He will be missed by many.

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## Our Thanks to You

From the entire Program in Medicine and Human Values team, we send a special thank you to our *Ethical Times* readers around the world. During this season of gratitude, we are grateful to readers like you for your feedback, encouragement, and profound generosity. Your continued support is deeply appreciated. Thank you!

As we approach the close to another year, we would like to thank our readers and other philanthropic partners who have already pledged their support with a gift to our program. Our work would not be possible without philanthropic gifts. If you would like to make your own contribution, please do so at: [www.cpmc.org/givenow-pmhv](http://www.cpmc.org/givenow-pmhv). No amount is too small.

You may also contact Emilia De Luz at **415-600-4112** or [deluzea@sutterhealth.org](mailto:deluzea@sutterhealth.org) to learn about opportunities to invest in our current initiatives.