Improving Health Care Ethics Consultation: Electronic Records & Reporting

**Chad Brizendine, M.D.**, UR SMD Class of 2016

Thesis: A modern Health Care Ethics Consultation Service (HCEC) should utilize the advantages of an electronic health record to make their work efficient, accessible, and easier to evaluate; this requires the creation of an intuitive data gathering template that can be utilized in the course of preparing a case consultation.

Statement of Impact: HCEC services are run by a diverse group of volunteers who frequently have few resources to assist them in evaluating past cases for education of consultants, tracking of community issues, and justification of services and funding to hospital administrators. The implementation of an e-record template that helps to gather and track ethical issues and cases would enable the HCEC service to self-monitor, report, and refine their purpose and services to the hospital community.

Methodology: In order to implement a template in the EPIC e-record you have to coordinate with the coding team to assign smart data points to information you want to gather from a submitted consultation note. Of the two methods available to do this, I have chosen to use a smart template design in order to minimize the degree of difference from the usual note system that current consultants are familiar with.  It is my hope that this will make adoption of the new template easier and quicker.  The limitation of this method is that it lacks the robustness of the case information gathering and tracking system known as "ECWeb" designed by the National Center for Ethics in Health Care and the VA HCEC service.  Through several meetings and discussions the final elements and template will be submitted to the programmers to match the chosen elements to smart data points so that they can be tracked as future notes using the template are submitted.  After the coding project is completed the template can be tested and the user interface to gather the submitted data will be evaluated and relevant administrators taught the process of utilizing it.