



# CEP At-A-Glance

## What is the Consortium Ethics Program (CEP)?

The collaborative continuing healthcare ethics educational program and regional resource network in western Pennsylvania.

- Provides members with a basic and advanced education in the major concepts and theoretical frameworks of bioethics and promotes clinical ethical problem-solving skills.
- Fosters a mutually respectful environment where healthcare providers and payers, regardless of corporate affiliation, talk about similar experiences and dilemmas, and advise each other on possible resolutions.
- Directed by Rosa Lynn Pinkus, PhD; Andrew Thurman, JD, MPH, interim associate director; Jody Stockdill, administrator; and Sarah Sudar, communications specialist.
  - Co-sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Department of Medicine and the Center for Bioethics and Health Law.
  - Originally funded through the Vira I. Heinz Endowment (1990-1996), the program has been self-supporting based on the participation fees of its members and the contributions of sponsoring organizations since 1996.

## What is the goal of the CEP?

To cost-effectively educate frontline healthcare professionals to become ethics resource persons and educators within their own institution. Many of our members currently serve as chair/co-chair of their ethics committee.

## Who are our members?

- Our current membership consists of 30 institutional members from hospitals throughout western Pennsylvania and 3 individual members.
- Since 1990, the CEP has enrolled 57 healthcare institutions throughout western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio, including acute care hospitals, long-term care and home healthcare facilities. Recently, the CEP has expanded its membership to include 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers, such as Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield.
- We have educated over 400 “frontline” healthcare professionals, including administrators, physicians, nurses, social workers, risk managers, pastoral care, and payer utilization reviewers.

## Current Member Institutions 2007-2010

Armstrong County Memorial Hospital  
Bradford Regional Medical Center  
Butler Health System  
Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC  
Clarion Hospital  
Clearfield Hospital  
Elk Regional Health System  
Excelsa Health – Frick Hospital  
Excelsa Health – Latrobe Area Hospital  
Excelsa Health – Westmoreland Hospital  
Highmark Inc.  
Indiana Regional Medical Center  
Jefferson Regional Medical Center  
Meadville Medical Center  
Somerset Hospital  
St. Clair Hospital  
The Uniontown Hospital  
UPMC Home Care  
UPMC McKeesport  
UPMC Northwest  
UPMC Passavant  
UPMC Presbyterian/Shadyside  
UPMC St. Margaret  
UPMC Senior Living  
UPMC South Side  
Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Butler  
Visiting Nurse Association of Indiana County  
West Penn Allegheny Health System – Forbes  
West Penn Allegheny Health System – West Penn  
Western Psychiatric Institute & Clinic

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## What are the benefits of CEP membership?

- **Annual Ethics Retreat** – Provides intensive ethics education and opportunities for networking with other CEP members.
- **Educational Seminars** – Offered four-times a year in Basic, Advanced, and Associates' tracks; each track is a 3-year program. The first year identifies and defines the principles of medical ethics; the second year explores the connection between law and ethics; and the third year examines the relationship linking ethics and the medical humanities.
- **Online Discussion Board** – Moderated by CEP Interim Associate Director Andrew Thurman, JD, MPH, the discussion board is used to enhance the ethics education of all members by overcoming distance and time barriers. This online site enables members to follow-up on topics covered in seminars, post cases, discuss issues, and share their experience with other members.
- **On-Site Programming** – Enables staff in member institutions to receive the same type of practical ethics education that CEP representatives receive. Each member institution is entitled to a maximum of 6 on-site programs per year. These “outreach” programs are generated by request of the representatives who assess the needs of their hospitals and institutions.
- **Ethics Survey** – Completed by each institution’s representatives, this survey guides the CEP in tailoring on-site programs to meet the specific needs of each institution.
- **Joint Commission Guidelines** – Recognize that the “ethical practitioner” must be supported by an ethical organization. The CEP provides an annual summary of CEP educational offerings and how this programming meets the ethics requirement of the standards.
- **Continuing Education Certification** – Provided for physicians (AMA PRA Category 1), nurses (ANCCCA PSNA), and social workers (State Board of Social Workers) at CEP retreat and education seminars.

## On-site programming: a closer look

The CEP has provided almost 900 programs to hospitals and institutions throughout western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio in the past 17 years. As committees have evolved from novelty to necessity at hospitals nationwide, the CEP’s role in supporting member institution’s goals for ethics planning has grown significantly. Most requested topics include:

- **End-of-Life Issues:** Advance directives/DNR, devising ethics policies, futility, withholding/withdrawing treatments, physician assisted suicide, and palliative care.
- **Basic Issues in Healthcare Ethics:** Core concepts and principles that form the framework to approach all healthcare ethics dilemmas. Topics include informed consent, ethics in clinical practice, confidentiality, decision-making capacity, and ethical theory.
- **Organizational Ethics:** Bedside rationing, managed care, staff and patient rights, pandemic ethics, and organizational policy development.

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*As the ethics needs of healthcare systems change, the CEP’s programming changes to meet these needs!*