HumEthNet REFLECTIONS

hhe Forum Highlights

See what all the discussions were about at the November 2012 *hhe Forum.*

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In Focus

Meet hhe network member Dónal O'Mathuna, PhD, and learn more about the Disaster Bioethics work he is doing funded by the European Union.

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Publications of interest

New articles on hhe for scholars and practitioners, authored by network members and of interest to them.

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Photo by Sonya de Laat

Participants at the *Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Forum* event held at McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada, November 22-24, 2012.

Visit the website:
www.humanitarianhealthethics.net

hhe humanitarian healthcare ethics
reflecting on ethical practice

Welcome!

It is with pleasure that we are launching this first issue of *HumEthNet Reflections*.

Ours is a quarterly publication written by and geared to a range of actors in the realm of humanitarian healthcare: humanitarian health care professionals and planners, educators, national and international volunteers, host community members, researchers & academics. As a unique

Photo by Elysée Nouvet

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snapshot of the latest developments, publications, and meetings related to humanitarian healthcare ethics, our goal with this newsletter is to document and provoke: exchange, discussions, (re)considerations and (re)evaluations of ethical needs, standards, space, and practices in a range of humanitarian healthcare contexts.

The Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Network, HumEthNet, was inaugurated on November 22-24, 2012, in Hamilton, Canada at the Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics, hhe, Forum, hosted by the hhe Research Group with funding from CIHR. Participants from a variety of disciplinary, organizational, professional, and country backgrounds engaged in an intensive deliberative forum on the development of realistic applications for ethics in humanitarian healthcare practice. The resulting international, interdisciplinary, interprofessional Network proposed a working statement to describe its aim:

> *A community of practice committed to developing & using research, education, policy, and/or tools to address ethical challenges in humanitarian healthcare in order to reduce practitioners' moral distress and improve ethical practice and decision-making at multiple levels.*

This newsletter, *HumEthNet Reflections*, is intended to sustain, strengthen and expand the relevance and reach of this community of practice. In every *Reflections* newsletter, you will find highlights from the hhe website, the profile of a network member, the latest publications by network members, new resources relevant to humanitarian healthcare ethics, and calls for conferences and papers. The newsletter is available in both electronic and pdf formats and subscription to the newsletter is free. We welcome your recommendations for new humanitarian healthcare ethics-related resources (articles, books, films, websites), events, and news, to be included in the upcoming issue. If you wish to make a submission, offer feedback or suggestions, write to us humethnet@gmail.com.

Thank you for your interest in Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics. Happy Reading!

All the Best,

The Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Research Group
Co-directors: Dr. Lisa Schwartz, McMaster University
                              Dr. Matthew Hunt, McGill University

In Focus: Dónal P. O'Mathúna, Ph.D.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna (Ph.D.) is Senior Lecturer in Ethics, Decision-Making & Evidence in the School of Nursing and Human Sciences, Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland. He is an Affiliated Scholar with the DCU Institute of Ethics, Chairperson of the DCU Research Ethics Committee and the ethicist on St. James's Hospital, Dublin ethics committee. Dónal has degrees in pharmacy and bioethics, and his research interests include: disaster bioethics (ethical issues delivering healthcare and conducting research after disasters); nanotechnology ethics; emotions and ethics, especially the role of literature and narrative in ethics teaching and training; Christian ethics; and systematic reviewing of healthcare interventions. Dónal has published peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on bioethics (see www.BioethicsIreland.ie) and Cochrane systematic reviews. Current book projects include editing *Disaster Bioethics: Normative Issues when Nothing is Normal* (Springer) and an evidence-based book on herbal remedies based on his *Irish Times* columns. Dónal has authored *Nanoethics: Big Ethical Issues with Small Technology* (Continuum, 2009), and *Alternative Medicine: The Christian Handbook*, updated and expanded edition (Zondervan, 2007).

DISASTER BIOETHICS ACTION

As of last year, Dónal has been the lead investigator for the European Union funded COST Action (IS1201) on Disaster Bioethics. Launched in October 2012 with a four-year budget of just over €500,000, this Action draws on the strengths of European scholars, international humanitarian agencies, medical relief personnel, and others in 25 participating countries to

Photo by Elysée Nouvet and Alberto Guevara

advance research and training and improve decision-making in disasters. Triage practices and long-term consequences of humanitarian healthcare interventions on beneficiaries are key issues the team will address. Ensuring aid sent in disasters is appropriate is another concern. As Dónal notes in a recent Irish Times article, "Just because we want to do good and feel a lot of compassion for people, it doesn't necessary mean they need what we want to send them," (November 13, 2012). The work of the Action is being carried out within four Working Groups focused on: (1) Healthcare ethics, (2) Bioethics, culture and moral theory, (3) Disaster research ethics, and (4) Ethics and governance. The Action's first working meeting will be at DCU on 25-26 April 2013, focused on identifying disaster ethics issues. Anyone interested in Disaster Bioethics can request to join the Action by emailing DisasterBioethics@dcu.ie. Further information on the Disaster Bioethics Action can be found at: http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/isch/Actions/IS1201 and at http://disasterbioethics.com/.

WEBSITE *highlights:* http://www.humanitarianhealthethics.net

ONGOING RESEARCH by the *hhe research group* ~ learn more about the research team, their initiation of the *HumEthNet*, and various ongoing research projects, including:

- Disaster research ethics, and

- Ethics of dual professions and other dilemmas in a military context.

Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Forum participants discuss training and education strategies and options. From L to R: Drs. Rosaria Indah, Teuku Renaldi, Lynda Redwood-Campbell, Donal O'Mathuna, and Carolyne Beukeboom, RN, listening to Dr. Carrie Bernard. *Photo by S. de Laat*

hhe Forum | Hamilton November 22-24 | 2012

At Issue

Why do we need humanitarian health ethics (as opposed to e.g. medical or public health ethics)?
What are the ethical challenges of humanitarian healthcare practice?
Where are the target opportunities for adding tools and/or other kinds of support for ethical humanitarian healthcare practice?

Highlights

- The hhe Forum inaugurates the Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Network or *HumEthNet*, with links to the research and network website: http://humanitarianhealthethics.net
- The forum features 29 participants with representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, Canada, Sweden, and Switzerland), Red Cross Canada and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as well as aid workers and academics from around the world
- 3 working groups are formed to develop research, policy, and education initiatives

Key Discussions
Reasons and justifications that support serious consideration of hhe should not be taken for granted, but made explicit. These include: i) to help respond to and support moral distress amongst field workers; ii) to ensure better, more ethical, care delivery and decision-making processes; iii) attention to ethics can increase organizational credibility and help limit legal liabilities.

Humanitarian healthcare ethics: more than an individual ethos
A commitment to hhe needs to be formalized throughout humanitarian healthcare projects and structures. While a temporal approach (before, during, after the field) to improving hhe is useful, such an approach needs to be coupled with broader strategies to avoid implying hhe starts and stops with individual actions and decisions.

Moral space requires community collaboration
Participants agreed that in order to make and maintain a moral space for the practice of humanitarian healthcare ethics, ethical interventions must work in collaboration with host communities.

The following working groups were formed and continue to collaborate to develop research, policy, and education initiatives: 1) **Theoretical** underpinnings for hhe; 2) **Educational** and case study initiatives for hhe; 3) **Operational** resources and policies for hhe.

A full summary of the November hhe Forum can be found at: **www.humanitarianhealthethics.net**

New articles...

* Authored by Network member(s)

Asgary R., Junck E. New trends of short-term humanitarian medical volunteerism: professional and ethical considerations. J Med Ethics. 2012 Dec. 12

Binns, Colin W., Mi Kyung Lee, Li Tang, Chuan Yu, Tomiko Hokama and Andy Lee. Ethical Issues in Infant Feeding After Disasters. *Asia Pac J Public Health* 2012 24: 672.

Calain, Philippe. Ethics and images of suffering bodies in humanitarian medicine. Social Science & Medicine xxx (2012) 1-8

*Hunt, Matthew, James Anderson and Renaud Boulanger. (2012). Ethical implications of disaster research diversity. *American Journal of Disaster Medicine.* 7(3): 211-221

*Hunt, Matthew, Christina Sinding, Lisa Schwartz. (2013) Tragic Choices in humanitarian healthcare practice. *Journal of Clinical Ethics.* 23(4): 338-344.

*Hunt, Matthew, Lisa Schwartz, Christina Sinding and Laurie Elit. (2013). The Ethics of Engaged Presence: a framework for health professionals in humanitarian assistance and development work. *Developing World Bioethics.* Available online from: http://www.journals.elsevier.com/social-science-and-medicine/.

* Abu-Sada, Caroline, Editor. (2012) *Dilemmas, challenges and ethics of humanitarian action*. McGill Queen's University Press. Includes articles by HumEthNet members: C. Abu-Sada, L. Elit, M. Hunt, K. Johnson, J. Pringle, L. Redwood-Campbell, L. Schwartz http://mqup.mcgill.ca/book.php?bookid=2920

Resources Journals

American Journal of Disaster Medicine

Conflict & Health

Developing World Bioethics

Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness

Disaster Prevention and Management

Disasters

Global Public Health

International Emergency Medicine

International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research

Journal of Humanitarian Assistance

Journal of Medical Ethics

Journal of Traumatic Studies

Lancet

Peace and Conflict

Prehospital and Disaster Medicine

Public Health Ethics

Social Sciences & Medicine

Resources and guidelines courtesy of D. O'Mathuna.

hhe in the field

call for SUBMISSIONS

We are seeking submissions of case studies based on lived experiences to inform and improve ethical performance in humanitarian healthcare settings.

If you are interested in authoring a case study to contribute to the *hhe web-based educational cases* please see the submission guidelines on the hhe website: http://humanitarianhealthethics.net/casestudies

Contribute to *REFLECTIONS*:

Reflections is the newsletter of the Humanitarian healthcare Ethics Network, or *HumEthNet,* the network formed during the Forum in November 2012.

If you have comments on newsletter content, are interested in submitting relevant article/book/resource announcement or other news to an upcoming newsletter, please contact: *humethnet@gmail.com*

hhe *Origins...*

Since 2009, a multidisciplinary team of researchers has been collaborating with the aim of helping to clarify the ethical issues that are present in humanitarian healthcare practice.

We began with a cluster of qualitative research studies, and swiftly began to see that the studies needed to be pulled together and a programme of research began to grow. Four years on, we invited a collection of scholars and practitioners to meet to help expand the goals of hhe research. This community of practice met in Hamilton, Ontario, in November 2012, and have since followed up to become a network of interested researchers and practitioners.

The Humanitarian Healthcare Ethics Network, or HumEthNet, is the multidisciplinary network created to exchange ideas and further collaborations to advance debate and generate knowledge to help inform ethical practice in humanitarian healthcare.

The humanitarian healthcare ethics research group, composed of Drs. Lisa Schwartz, Matthew Hunt, Lynda Redwood-Campbell, Laurie Elit, Elysée Nouvet, along with graduate students Sonya de Laat, Leigh-Anne Gillespie, Veronique Fraser, Catherine Olivier and Renaud Boulanger, hosted the 2012 *hhe Forum* that resulted in the *HumEthNet* and the *Reflections Newsletter*.

If you are interested in joining the HumEthNet network, contact:
humethnet@gmail.com

Select Guidelines

Sphere Project

MSF Manuals & Guidelines online

Red Cross Code of Practice

Dictionary of International Humanitarian Law

CCGH tool kit

UN Emergency Council

The Joint Policy of Operations (JPO)

Principles and Policies of Humanitarian Operations (PPHO)

International Disaster Response Law (RC/RC Rules for Disaster Response)

The Good Enough Guide

The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP)

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP)

COMPAS Method

Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (*LEGS*)

IASC Guidelines on Emergencies