

**Center for Health Policy & Ethics Newsletter - Omaha, Nebraska**

**Spring 2007**

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**SPRING EVENTS**

**Roundtables**

Welfare, Medicine, and Sexuality: A Historian's Approach  
April 5 (3:30 - 4:30 pm)  
*Britta McEwen, PhD, History*

Tackling Both Universal Access and Cost Control - The Oregon Health Assessment Project  
April 11 (3:30 - 4:30 pm)  
*John A. Benson, Jr., MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center*

## Director's Report: Mission-driven Initiatives "Spring" Up at CHPE

by Amy Haddad, PhD

The spring semester is an excellent time to take stock of the recent work of the Center and how these initiatives fit with the mission and strategic aims of the Center. The first strategic aim, "Contributing to the formation of ethically committed health professionals," is met in a variety of ways such as the monthly, often bimonthly, roundtable discussions held in the Center's conference room on topics that range from the ethics of outsourcing clinical trials to developing countries to the moral management of errors in clinical practice. Attendees at the roundtable discussions come from all across campus representing numerous disciplines, as well as interested parties from the community. The Center co-sponsored a School of Pharmacy and Health Professions Distinguished Lecture presented by Mark Kuczewski, Ph.D., Director of the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics and Health Policy and the Fr. Michael I. English, S.J., Professor of Medical Ethics at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. The topic of his lecture, "The Promise of Professionalism: Can we get there from here?" was particularly timely as many of the health science programs and health professionals are struggling to find best practices for interdisciplinary education and practice.



*Amy M. Haddad, Director, Center for Health Policy and Ethics, and Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Endowed Chair in Health Sciences*

Several members of the Center Faculty, Associates, and Affiliates serve as members of the Saint Joseph Hospital Ethics Committee to further its work in clinical ethics. Center faculty member, Christy Rentmeester, Ph.D., serves on the Case Consultation subcommittee. Todd Salzman, Ph.D., Faculty Associate, serves on the Ethics Committee and as Chair of the Education Subcommittee. Karen Boardman, R.N., M.S., C.S., Faculty Affiliate, is a member of the Education Subcommittee and has begun work this spring on a needs assessment with staff in nursing, social work and pastoral care at the hospital. The Education Subcommittee has recently held lunchtime learning sessions to assist interested staff members at the hospital in discerning when it is appropriate to request an ethics consultation.

A second specific aim of the Center is "Advancing an ethic of service, justice and compassion for others." Two examples of projects/events of the Center that promote the second strategic aim are: the formation of the Health Inequalities Inquiry Group (HIIG) led by John Stone, M.D., Ph.D. and Christy Rentmeester, Ph.D. and the second Health Policy Forum held in October 2006 that dealt with health issues that affect children. There is a separate article by John Stone, M.D., Ph.D., in this issue of FOCUS (see Health Inequalities: A Multidimensional Initiative) that provides a more in-depth description about HIIG's aims and membership. HIIG is an excellent example of the Center's commitment to convene a broad representation of individuals who bring the best thinking to a task in a safe and respectful environment. The second Health Policy Forum included an excellent overview of the health problems affecting children in Nebraska by Kathy Moore of Voices for Children (<http://www.voicesforchildren.com/kidscount.htm>). The presentation was followed by a panel discussion and dialogue with attendees. The panelists were: Senator Joel Johnson; Senator Gwen Howard; Chris Rodgers, Douglas County Commissioner; Dr. Karl Roth, Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at CUMC; and Dr. Joann Schaefer, Director of Regulation and Licensure and Chief Medical Officer for the State of Nebraska.

Also, in October 2006, the Center co-sponsored a School of Medicine Distinguished Lecture with the Department of Surgery. The Distinguished Lecture is a good example of the types of activities that meet our third strategic goal: "Fostering intellectual exchange in solidarity with the human community." Father Kevin O'Rourke, O.P., J.C.D., S.T.M., Professor of Bioethics at the Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics and Health Policy at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, presented a lecture titled "Nutrition and Hydration in End-of-Life Care." The invitation to Father O'Rourke was extended in the spring of 2006, long before the proposed Humane Care Amendment appeared on the political horizon in Nebraska. Thus, Father O'Rourke's presentation was particularly timely and informative given the policy implications for the state.

These highlights of major projects and activities are representative of the ongoing work of the Center. In addition, Center Faculty, Associates, and Affiliates continue to be engaged in teaching across the health sciences and other programs on campus, interdisciplinary scholarship and service on a university-wide and community basis.

## Anne Lamott to Present 18th Annual Women and Health Lecture

by Amy Haddad, PhD

The Center for Health Policy and Ethics is proud to announce that noted novelist Anne Lamott will present the 18th Annual Women and Health Lecture at a new venue - the Joslyn Art Museum Witherspoon Concert Hall on September 19, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. The lecture is free and open to the public. Anne Lamott's presentation will be based on her three collections of essays on faith titled, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*, *Traveling Mercies*, and most recently *Grace (Eventually): Thoughts on Faith*. Because of Anne Lamott's honesty and humor, her essays on faith appeal to a broad audience ranging from devout believers to non-believers and everyone in-between. Her writing is filled with inspiration. She is a graduate of Drew College Preparatory School in San Francisco, California. She has been honored with a Guggenheim Fellowship and has taught at University of California at Davis and writing conferences across the country. She has published six novels beginning with *Hard Laughter* that she wrote for her father, the novelist Kenneth Lamott, when he was diagnosed with brain cancer. Her work relates to the overarching theme of the lecture, Women and Health, by exploring the spiritual dimensions of life, an essential component of wholeness and health. The lecture itself will be followed by a question and answer period with the audience. Subsequent to the discussion with the audience, Anne Lamott will be available for a book signing. Although the lecture is free, attendees are required to register.



Anne Lamott  
Photograph by Mark Richards

## CHPE and Boys Town National Research Hospital Partnership on Literature and Medicine Seminar

*by Amy Haddad, PhD*

The Center for Health Policy and Ethics and Boys Town National Research Hospital received a grant from the Nebraska Humanities Council to fund a Literature & Medicine: Humanities at the Heart of Health Care seminar for six monthly, two-hour sessions, January 2007 through June 2007. The Literature & Medicine program was developed by the Maine Humanities Council (MHC). The Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) is one of several state humanities council partners in the program. The Boys Town National Research Hospital is an ideal and unique health care partner for this inaugural Literature & Medicine program in the state of Nebraska. The goals of the program are to: 1) provide interdisciplinary participants the opportunity to connect the world of science and health care with the world of literature and their own experiences as well as those of their patients; 2) create an opportunity for participants to reflect on their professional roles and relationships through literature; 3) share these reflections with colleagues; and 4) evaluate the impact of the program on personal growth and professional practice.

The benefits of the Literature & Medicine program have been confirmed by the evaluations of the numerous offerings of the program in Maine and other states. The benefits include: 1) co-workers will get to know each other in a different way than commonly encountered in the work setting; and 2) the positive changes in interpersonal relationships among participants in the Literature & Medicine program will transform communication. Amy Haddad, Ph.D., Director of CHPE is the facilitator of the program. She worked with two humanities consultants, Mark Schenker, Ph.D. (Yale University) and Mary Helen Stefaniak, M.F.A. (Creighton University), to develop the syllabus for the seminar. Dr. Thomas Tonniges at Boys Town National Research Hospital serves as the Liaison for the program. The readings for the six sessions were chosen because of their relevance to the clinical work that occurs at the hospital. Readings from the world of fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction that illuminate the work of those at Boys Town National Research Hospital include works by Flannery O'Connor, Lorrie Moore, and Uwem Akpan. Twenty participants comprise the group representing a variety of staff members from Boys Town National Research hospital including nurses, patient representatives, physicians, a speech pathologist, child life specialist, pharmacist, researcher and audiologist.



*Literature and Medicine Seminar participants discuss the works of Flannery O'Connor.*



## CHPE Co-Sponsors Global Health Expert at Inaugural Menolascino Lecture

*by Helen Shew*

The inaugural Frank Menolascino Memorial Distinguished Lecture was held Thursday, October 26, 2006 at the Creighton University Medical Center Morrison Seminar Room. The lecture is supported by an endowment provided by the Owen Foundation in honor of Dr. Menolascino. Additional support was provided by co-sponsors that included Creighton University's School of Medicine, Center for Health Policy and Ethics, Continuing Medical Education Division, and Department of Psychiatry.

The lecture is named in honor of Frank Menolascino, the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Creighton from 1989-1994. Frank was deeply committed to social justice, generous of his time and talent, and a highly regarded psychiatrist who contributed importantly to development of diagnostic and treatment modalities for persons suffering simultaneously from mental retardation and mental illness.



*Dr. Frank Menolascino, the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Creighton from 1989-1994.*

Christopher Murray, M.D., D.Phil., a leading expert on global health care and principal investigator in the landmark World Health Organization Global Disease Burden Study, delivered the inaugural lecture entitled "Global Health Challenges." Dr. Murray is Saltonstall Professor and director of both the Harvard Initiative for Global Health and the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies. A physician and health economist, his early work focused on tuberculosis control and the development of the pioneering Global Burden of Disease project at Harvard University. Recently, he has initiated major new approaches to the measurement of population health, cost-effectiveness analysis, and the conceptualization, measurement, and national application of health systems performance assessment.

Dr. Murray presented findings of a report released in September titled "Eight Americas: Investigating Mortality Disparities across Races, Counties, and Race-Counties in the United States" of which he is lead author. He emphasized the unsatisfactory outcomes of the U.S. health care system, pointing out that the gap between the highest and lowest life expectancies for race-county combinations in the United States is more than 35 years, with millions of the worst-off Americans having life expectancies typical of developing countries.

## CHPE Director Wins 2007 Pellegrino Medal

by Marybeth Goddard

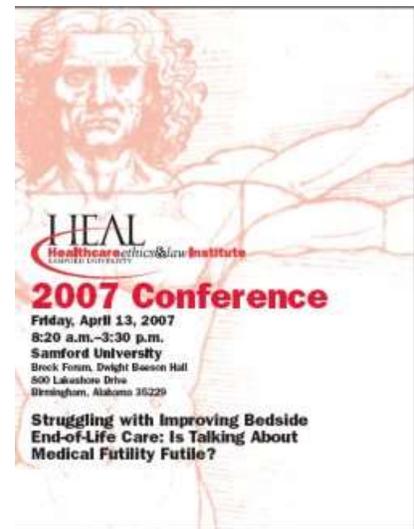
CHPE's Director and the Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Endowed Chair in the Health Sciences, Amy M. Haddad, PhD, RN, is a recipient of the 2007 Pellegrino Medal for contributions to health care ethics awarded at the 2007 Conference of the Healthcare Ethics & Law Institute of Samford University.

The Pellegrino Medal, awarded by the Healthcare Ethics and Law Institute (HEAL) of Birmingham, Alabama's Samford University, was first awarded in 2001. The Medal honors individuals recognized nationally "for contributions to healthcare ethics in the selfless spirit of Edmund D. Pellegrino." Dr. Pellegrino is a faculty member at Georgetown University and a key figure in bioethics. In 1998, the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities awarded Dr. Pellegrino its first lifetime achievement award, recognizing him as "the father of the American bioethics movement."

There are two other recipients of this year's award: George J. Annas, JD, MPH, Boston University and Lawrence J. Schneiderman, MD, University of California at San Diego.



*Amy M. Haddad, Director, Center for Health Policy and Ethics, and Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Endowed Chair in Health Sciences, will be awarded the Pellegrino Medal at the 2007 Conference of the Healthcare Ethics & Law Institute of Samford University.*



## Educating for Moral Action Wins Alpha Sigma Nu Book Award

by Chris Jorgensen

*Educating for Moral Action: A Sourcebook for Health and Rehabilitation Ethics* has been selected as the winner of the 2006 Alpha Sigma Nu Book Award in the category for the health sciences. The book was submitted last spring for the competition by the Office of Interprofessional Scholarship, Service, and Education within the Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions (SPAPH). There were 44 entries from 15 Jesuit Institutions.

Editors of the book are Dr. Ruth Purtilo, Director of the Ethics Initiative of the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions and Contributed-Service Faculty, Center for Health Policy and Ethics (CHPE); Dr. Gail Jensen, Dean of Creighton University's Graduate School, Associate Vice President for Faculty Development in the Office of Academic Affairs, and Faculty Associate, CHPE; and Dr. Charlotte Royeen, Dean of the Doisy College of Health Sciences at Saint Louis University. Other Creighton University contributors to the book include Dr. Amy Haddad, Director, CHPE; Dr. Linda Gabriel Franck, Assistant Professor and Vice Chair of Occupational Therapy, SPAHP and Faculty Affiliate, CHPE; and Dr. Ivelisse Lazzarini, Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy, SPAHP.

*Educating for Moral Action* is written for physical therapy and occupational therapy administrators, curriculum coordinators and educators. Stemming from the 2003 conference entitled, "Dreamcatchers: Leadership in Ethics Education," the authors have assembled a veritable "who's who" of PT and OT academics to share their insights regarding contemporary issues in health and rehabilitation ethics. Going beyond the "nuts and bolts" of teaching ethics, the text aims to present pedagogical strategies that will ultimately change how educators think and, consequently, how they teach ethics to the next generation of health professionals.

The recent selection of *Educating for Moral Action* as a Book Award winner continues a distinguished tradition of Creighton University publications honored by Alpha Sigma Nu.

## Past Creighton University Alpha Sigma Nu Book Award Winners

### 2003

Purtilo, Ruth B., and Haddad, Amy M. 2002. *Health professional and patient interaction*. 6th ed. Philadelphia, Pa.: Saunders.

### 2001

Evans, Bette N. 1997. *Interpreting the free exercise of religion: the Constitution and American pluralism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

### 1989

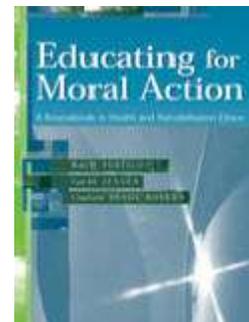
Firmage, Edwin B., and Mangrum, Richard C. 1988. *Zion in the courts: a legal history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

### 1981

Schultenover, David G. 1981. *George Tyrrell: in search of Catholicism*. Shepherdstown W.Va.: Patmos Press.



*Educating for Moral Action* editor Dr. Gail Jensen, and contributors Dr. Amy Haddad and Dr. Linda Gabriel Franck are recognized at the Creighton University Alpha Sigma Nu induction ceremony.



Purtilo, Ruth B., Jensen, Gail M., and Royeen, Charlotte Brasic. 2005. *Educating for moral action: a sourcebook in health and rehabilitation ethics*. Philadelphia: F.A. Davis.

## End-of-Life Care in Pediatrics

by Archana Chatterjee, MD

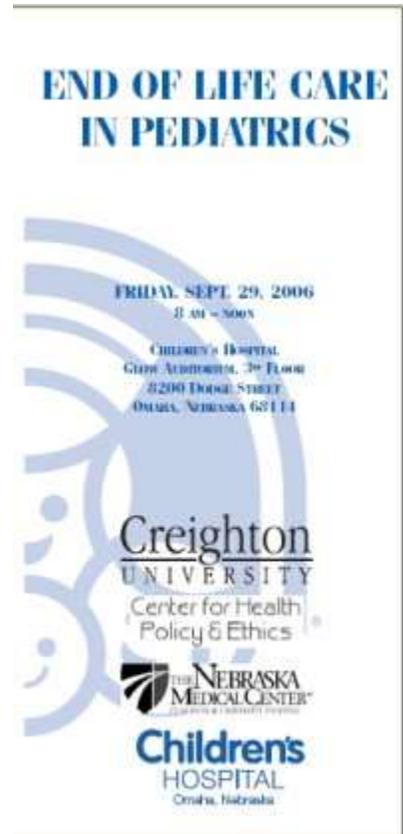
Among the biggest challenges many physicians face in their careers is to communicate effectively and compassionately to patients and families about end-of-life issues. This is particularly true in pediatrics where formal ethics education on the topic is often lacking during medical school and residency training. Recognizing the need for a locally available educational program, a collaborative continuing medical education program was developed by Creighton University Medical Center's Department of Pediatrics, Division of Continuing Medical Education, Center for Health Policy and Ethics, Children's Hospital, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The needs assessment for this program was based upon an article that appeared in Pediatrics in October 2005.<sup>1</sup>

A planning committee met over several months to define the target program, the format, and to develop the final program. The conference, a half-day seminar, was held at Children's Hospital on September 29, 2006. Dr. Tom Poulton was the keynote speaker; a panel that included physicians, a nurse, a pharmacist, an ethicist, a chaplain, and a lawyer discussed typical cases illustrating end-of-life care challenges in pediatrics. Active audience participation was elicited during the seminar.

A total of 53 attendees included physicians, nurses, pharmacists, chaplains, social workers, and ethicists. Four hours of continuing education credits were offered. According to the evaluations from those attending the seminar, it was an unqualified success, meeting and exceeding its goal of providing diverse perspectives and communicating new developments in the care of children with life-threatening conditions. It also raised awareness of these matters in the local community and provided an opportunity for networking among professionals involved in the care of these children and their families. Future plans include making the program available periodically and placing it online so that individuals unable to attend may access it and benefit from the information presented.

Reference:

<sup>1</sup>Solomon, Mildred Z., et al. 2005. New and lingering controversies in pediatric end-of-life care. Pediatrics 116, 872-883.



*Brochure from the End Of Life Care in Pediatrics Conference, September 29, 2006.*

## Hagel Health Care Commission Report

by Richard O'Brien, MD

In February 2006, Senator Chuck Hagel (R, NE) appointed a commission to examine and make comprehensive recommendations for transforming American health care. The fifteen-member commission was chaired by Charles J. Marr. It included Drs. Chris Bradberry, Dean of the Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, and Daniel Wilson, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry of the Creighton University School of Medicine. Commission members represented a broad range of stakeholders including providers, insurers, large and small businesses, and consumers.



*Members of the Health Care Commission created by Senator Hagel presented their report to him at Creighton Medical Center on February 2, 2007.*

The commission deliberated for nearly a year, considering the literature on the state of American health care and testimony from a number of sources. It delivered its final report and recommendations to Senator Hagel on the Creighton campus February 2, 2007. Based upon its thorough analysis of the current state of American health care, the commission made a number of far-reaching recommendations:

- Mandate a basic health care plan for all Americans that includes acute and chronic care, mental, dental, vision, palliative, and long-term care and emphasizes patient-centered care focused on prevention, health promotion, and coordinated care across the lifespan.
- Attract, develop, educate and retain health care providers and provide a funding mechanism to support workforce development and incentives to attract practitioners to high-need areas.
- Focus on quality and safety by emphasizing evidence-based guidelines with the expectation that providers will be reimbursed for using guidelines and producing good outcomes.
- Emphasize the vital role of public health.
- Expand public health infrastructure and services.
- Decrease the practice of defensive medicine by establishing mandatory dispute resolution procedures.
- Give all Americans free choice of purchasing the basic insurance plan from private insurers or a new federal plan developed by redesigning Medicare; Medicaid would be ended.
- Funding by a public-private partnership that includes employers, employees, individuals, and government.
- Create an independent Health Care Transformation Commission (HCTC) modeled on the Federal Reserve System to guide implementation of the commission's recommendations, develop ongoing modifications, updates, and evaluation of further health policy changes.

Recent nursing graduate Bradley Stephan, Center Associate Dr. Don Frey, and Center Member Dr. Richard O'Brien were invited to make a presentation and recommendations to the commission, a number of which were incorporated into its final report and recommendations. Dr. O'Brien also served as a consultant to the commission during its deliberations.

## Health Inequalities: A Multidimensional Initiative Focus on Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status

by John Stone, MD, PhD



*Health Inequalities Inquiry Group members.*

A diverse Creighton group is framing a new effort to eliminate significantly inferior health care that many of our people experience. The focus is adverse health inequalities in racial and ethnic minorities and the poor. Other health inequalities of concern include those related to mental health and age extremes. Omaha is the initial focus. (For more information and links about health disparities, see a later section.)

CHPE is fostering this effort because:

- Creighton University and the Center for Health Policy and Ethics have deep and broad commitments to eliminate disadvantage that impairs people's capability to lead rewarding lives.
- Multiple interacting factors cause these inequalities. Examples include inequalities in education, environment, income and wealth, and healthcare.
- Many Omaha communities, institutions, organizations, and individuals (private and professional) already address health inequalities.
- Thus, Omaha is fertile ground for creating new collaborative enterprises that can further diminish and eliminate health inequalities.
- Given the complexity of causes, people with diverse knowledge, experience, and expertise must collaborate to eliminate such health disparities. In academia, examples are health professionals, sociologists, anthropologists, and community outreach personnel. Others include members of stakeholder communities, public and private organizations that work to eliminate health inequalities, and community leaders.
- Diverse communities and populations are affected; fairness, respect, and local knowledge demand that they must have a major voice in developing strategies for addressing health inequalities.
- In short, only collaboration by diverse people can develop effective solutions to health inequalities.
- Health policy considerations are crucial for developing solutions to health inequalities. Are existing resource allocation policies fair? If not, how should those policies change? Do populations experiencing adverse health inequalities have a fair voice in determining policy?
- CHPE faculty and staff have knowledge and expertise related to ethics, policy, community relations, information technology, and facilitation-coordination.
- Thus, CHPE is well-positioned to foster and nourish a broad-based effort to eliminate health inequalities.

In light of the above, diverse and committed individuals in the Creighton University community are giving their time to frame how to launch this initiative. The goal is to draft a process that ensures that diverse stakeholders across the Omaha area craft and nourish a multidimensional and sustained enterprise.

Building on a model at Yale University, the guiding concept is of an organic-dynamic enterprise that motivates and supports multiple group efforts to eliminate health inequalities. (See Working Groups at <http://www.yale.edu/bioethics/>.) These efforts can be directed toward enhancing knowledge, education, community interventions, policy changes, and advocacy.

## Formative Principles

- Core moral values and goals include those of CHPE, Creighton University, and others that participants determine through fair deliberation.
- All major stakeholders must have the opportunity to frame and participate in this health inequalities initiative.

## Stages of development

This envisioned process will proceed through the following stages of development:

Envisioned Stages					
Stage	1	2	3	4	5
Activity	Pre-planning	Planning	Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inquiry</li> <li>• Workgroup               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ education</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inquiry</li> <li>• Workgroup               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ education</li> <li>○ research</li> <li>○ intervention</li> <li>○ advocacy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Progress and Next Steps

We are nearing completion of Stage 1. Creighton participants are drafting a provisional framework for the larger enterprise, including aims, purposes, a preamble, and principles for discussion. In Stage 2, diverse participants from the larger Omaha community (institutions, organizations, community members, leaders, professionals) will be invited to form the planning group. Selected members of the pre-planning group will continue in the planning group. CHPE faculty will continue to facilitate the effort. The planning group will review and revise the initial framework in light of overall purposes of the effort and moral values and goals of CHPE and Creighton University.

## More on Health Inequalities: Important and Challenging

In the United States, not to mention the world, many population groups could have much better health. In the US, there are numerous reports of widespread health and healthcare inequalities affecting racial and ethnic minorities and the poor. In the US and globally, being a woman or a child also reduces the likelihood of optimal health or healthcare.

Solid evidence of widespread health and healthcare inequalities is now readily available. In the US, good sources include the Institute of Medicine report on healthcare disparities related to race and ethnicity (<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10260.html>), the Kaiser Family Foundation ([http://kaisernetwork.org/daily\\_reports/rep\\_disparities.cfm](http://kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/rep_disparities.cfm)), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality National Healthcare Disparities Report 2006 (<http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nhdr06/nhdr06.htm>), and the Office of Minority Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/omh/>).

There are multiple causes of health inequalities associated with race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Most important are inequalities in so-called social determinants of health: education, income, wealth and environment. Better health correlates with more education, higher income and wealth, and safer environments. These factors influence health more than does healthcare, but the latter is very important.

Inequalities in social determinants related to race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status are commonly due to multi-generational inequities, including a long history of discrimination in opportunities for good housing, education, and jobs. Poverty radically and adversely affects the same opportunities.

Good health is essential for living a fully flourishing human life. Modern societies have significant capacity to improve people's health. It is a tragedy of the first order that the United States has populations with very inferior health and healthcare. Most of these inequities are preventable, remediable, and unjust.

## Health Inequalities Inquiry Group Participants

MK Anderson, PhD, APRN, BC  
Associate Professor, Nursing  
Program Chair, Advanced Practice Specialties  
Creighton University Medical Center School of Nursing

Ricardo Ariza, MSW  
Director, Multicultural Affairs  
Creighton University

Shirley A. Blanchard, Ph.D., ABDA, OTR/L  
Associate Professor Department of Occupational Therapy  
Associate Professor Department of Medicine

Patricia Castro, MPA  
Community Outreach Services Administrator  
Creighton University Medical Center Partnership in Health

Theola M. Cooper, BS  
Program Coordinator  
Creighton Community Health Center  
Creighton University Medical Center

Jason M. Foster, MD  
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School of Medicine  
Creighton University Medical Center

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Marybeth Goddard, BSBA  
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Creighton University Medical Center

Kelly A. Gould, R.D.H., M.A.  
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Creighton University Medical Center

Chris Jorgensen, MS  
Technical Specialist  
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Creighton University Medical Center

Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, M.D., M.S.P.H., M.B.A.  
Associate Vice President for HSMACA  
Associate Professor in the School of Medicine  
Creighton University

Richard L. O'Brien, MD  
University Professor

Center for Health Policy and Ethics  
Creighton University Medical Center

Frank T. Peak, MPA  
Community Outreach Services Project Administrator  
Creighton University Medical Center Partnership in Health

Athena Ramos, MS  
Health Educator  
The Cardiac Center of Creighton University

Christy A. Rentmeester, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Center for Health Policy and Ethics  
Creighton University Medical Center

Helen Shew, MBA  
Programming and Community Relations Coordinator,  
Center for Health Policy and Ethics  
Creighton University Medical Center

John R. Stone, MD, PhD  
Adjunct Professor  
Center Health Policy and Ethics  
Creighton University Medical Center

#### **Involved CHPE Personnel**

Reflecting the Center's serious commitment to this health inequalities initiative, staff and faculty of CHPE are involved as follows:

Facilitation: Drs. John Stone, Christy Rentmeester, and Richard O'Brien  
Coordination: Ms. Marybeth Goddard  
Community Relations Expertise: Ms. Helen Shew  
Information Technology Expertise: Ms. Chris Jorgensen

## Nursing and Health Care Ethics: A Legacy and a Vision

by Winifred J. Ellenchild Pinch, EdD

What could be more professionally exciting for a nurse ethicist than to gather nurse scholars in ethics to meet together at one's own institution? For me, nothing surpasses the fruition of this project which Dr. Amy Haddad and I began to discuss about three years ago. Now that the dates of the working seminar are approaching (April 25-27), it is difficult to believe that over a year and one-half ago I began to contact our colleagues in nursing ethics to enlist their participation in this momentous event.

Given the birth of modern bioethics somewhere around the 1970s and the recent onset of a new millennium, we believed it was time to take stock of nurse ethicists' research. As we reviewed the publications in nursing ethics, we identified eight themes which formed the organizational framework for our project. These themes were: philosophy and theory; politics, administration, and systems; relationships; vulnerability; advocacy; care and caring; pain and suffering; and diversity and disparities. As an introduction to this work, we also wanted to include commentary on the institutionalization of nursing ethics as exemplified by our professional organization, the American Nurses Association. Finally, we wanted to elicit these nurses' perspectives on where this work on nursing ethics might take us in the future. Although there were more nurses we wanted to include than would be reasonable given a number of variables, twenty-three nurse scholars will be participating.

The project consists of several parts: preparation for a working seminar through the development of an essay by each scholar, participation in a two-day seminar devoted to an examination and exploration of the issues raised by the content of the various essays, revision of the essays based on the seminar experience, and publication of the final contributions. Each scholar was asked to write an essay about her own work in ethics and to describe the implications of that work for the future of the profession and the broader disciplines of bioethics and health care. Essays were requested to be submitted prior to the working seminar so that the seminar may be used for reflection, commentary, and discussion of each rather than the full presentation of each scholar's work. We look forward to this opportunity with great eagerness. The themes are expected to provide an organizational framework for a proposed book although the resulting process and content of the seminar might require some adjustments relative to this plan.

In addition to the nurse ethicists, three scholars will help capture the dynamics of this historic event. These include a nurse historian, a medical sociologist/anthropologist, and a poet. Given their individual analytical skills, the historian and the anthropologist will also each contribute an essay for the book that reflects their observations and perspectives of the participants and their interactions during the seminar. The poet will provide a poem or short narrative that will be used to introduce each of the themes of the book. Two professional group facilitators will be responsible for managing the schedule and group process during the two days. Dr. Haddad and I will also provide our own contributions to the publication as bookends: my essay will summarize the project's initiation and development, Amy's reflections will provide closing commentary about the project.

The nurse ethicists participants include: **Mila Aroskar**, EdD, FAAN Associate Faculty Emerita, Center for Bioethics, University of Minnesota, MN; **Anne Bishop**, EdD Professor Emerita Nursing, Lynchburg College, Virginia; **Leah Curtin**, MA, MS, FAAN, Senior Partner/CEO Metier Consultants and Clinical Professor of Nursing, University of Cincinnati; **Anne J. Davis**, PhD, FAAN Professor Emerita, University of California School of Nursing at San Francisco CA and Nagano College of Nursing, Japan; **Judith Erlen**, PhD, FAAN, Professor and PhD Program Coordinator, School of Nursing and Center for Bioethics and Health Law, University of Pittsburgh, PA; **Marsha Fowler**, PhD, FAAN, Professor, School of Nursing, Azusa Pacific University, CA; **Sara Fry**, PhD, FAAN, formerly School of Nursing, Boston College; **Shake Ketefian**, EdD, FAAN, Professor and Director of International Affairs, School of Nursing, University of Michigan; **Joan**

## Nursing and Health Care Ethics: A Legacy and A Vision

April 25-27, 2007



Sponsored by  
the Center for Health Policy and Ethics  
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of Creighton University Medical Center  
Omaha, Nebraska



*Legacy planning committee members, (left-right) Helen Shew, facilitator John Hall, Amy Haddad, PhD, Winifred Ellenchild Pinch, EdD.*

**Liaschenko**, PhD, FAAN, Professor, Center for Bioethics and School of Nursing, University of Minnesota, MN; Beverly McElmurry, EdD, FAAN, Professor and Associate Dean for Global Health, University of Illinois at Chicago; **Pam Miya**, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Nursing; **Catherine Murphy**, EdD, formerly Professor, School of Nursing, Boston College, MA; **Joy Penticuff**, PhD, FAAN, Lee Hage and Joseph Jamail Professor, University of Texas at Austin, School of Nursing; **M. Simone Roach**, CSM, PhD, Writer and Researcher, Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada; **Cynda Rushton**, PhD, FAAN, Associate Professor of Nursing, Faculty Berman Bioethics Institute, Program Director, Home of Love Compassionate Care, Johns Hopkins University and Children's Center, Baltimore, MD; **M. Colleen Scanlon**, Senior Vice President for Advocacy, Catholic Health Initiatives, Denver, CO; **Sarah Shannon**, PhD, Biobehavioral Nursing and Health Systems, University of Washington, Seattle, WA; **Mary Cipriano Silva**, PhD, FAAN, Professor Emerita, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA; **Anita Tarzian**, PhD, Ethics and Research Consultant, Adjunct Faculty, University of Maryland School of Law and School of Nursing; **Carol Taylor**, PhD, Director Center for Clinical Bioethics, Assistant Professor of Nursing, Georgetown University, Washington, DC; **Joyce Thompson**, DrPH, FAAN, Lacey Professor of Community Health Nursing, Bronson School of Nursing and Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI; **Gladys White**, PhD, Adjunct Professor of Liberal Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, DC; and **Mary Ellen Wurzbach**, PhD, TRISS Endowed Professor, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

The additional scholars are **Patricia D. Antonio**, PhD, FAAN, Adjunct Associate Professor of Nursing and Associate Director, Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; **Shireen Rajaram**, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, NE; and **Cortney Davis**, APRN, MA, Nurse Practitioner, Danbury Hospital, CT. **Warren T. Reich**, STD, Distinguished Research Professor, Department of Theology, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, has agreed to write the Foreword. The facilitators are **John Hall** and **Sue Twit** from Right Management Consultants of Omaha.

Again, we look forward to this experience and the outcome of the project. We are very excited about having such a distinguished group of nurse scholars gather at Creighton University in order to focus on our common interests in nursing ethics, bioethics, and health care. Check our web site in the future for additional information about the proposed book as information about the publication will be posted when appropriate.

## Welie Weighs in on Nebraska Humane Care Amendment

**Editor's note:** in the Fall 2006 FOCUS, the Director's Report described an initiative to amend the Nebraska Constitution that according to its drafters "would humanely protect any person, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, disability, or gender from the withholding of food or water by any institution with a legal duty of care (such as a hospital, orphanage, prison or nursing home) if the withholding of that nourishment could reasonably result in death from dehydration or starvation. This measure allows for honoring the will of any person who has expressly requested withholding of food or water under specific conditions, or delegated to relatives that decision, by means of a valid advance directive given previously." Center faculty member Jos Welie, PhD, provides an update and describes some relevant Center activities and resources.

### The Nebraska Humane Care Amendment

by Jos Welie, PhD

Will Nebraska become the first state to require by law that each patient be given artificial nutrition and hydration, even if it harms the dying patient?

In preparation for the 2006 elections, a petition drive was held in Nebraska to gather signatures in favor of what is called the "Humane Care Amendment." If passed, this Amendment will change the Nebraska constitution such that every patient in the state must be provided nutrition and hydration. Food and water will have to be administered by any means possible, such as catheters and tubes, even if it requires restraining a confused patient dying from end-stage Alzheimer's dementia. Furthermore, the Amendment does not allow health care providers to consider the harmful consequences of such medically administered food and water.



*Jos Welie, PhD, Professor, Center for Health Policy & Ethics*

When patients are near death, their bodies frequently tell them so. They no longer desire large quantities of food and water. Maybe an ice chip to moisten their lips, but not water pumped into them. Indeed, such a water overload may cause their lungs to fill up with fluid, resulting in shortness of breath. Nausea and vomiting can result when a dying patient no longer desires food, yet it is pumped into them. The Amendment considers none of this. Indeed, it requires physicians to disregard these harmful side-effects. The only exception allowed by the Amendment is refusal by advance directive. Only about a third of Nebraskans have such an advance directive. Moreover, children and adults who have never been mentally competent cannot have an advance directive.

What makes this whole situation worse is that the legislative process will not allow for any discussion of this Amendment. There will be no opportunity to seek middle ground, adjust the text to avoid the kinds of harms listed above, and make adequate provisions for people who simply prefer to spend their dying days free of tubes, pumps and other medical technologies. If the Amendment makes it onto the ballot, all that is required is a majority of Nebraskans voting in favor of it and it will become constitutional law. Chances are, many voting Nebraskans will not read the actual text of the Amendment, which is written in very dense legal jargon. They will simply see the title, conclude that they too want "humane care," and vote in favor. Only when reality hits and physicians begin forcing food and water into their dying mother or, worse, dying child, will they realize what they voted for.

So who proposed this harmful Amendment in the first place? Investigative research by journalists of the Omaha World-Herald newspaper has revealed that the origins of this Amendment lie largely outside of the state of Nebraska. Behind "Nebraskans for Humane Care," which officially sponsors this Amendment, are various out-of-state interest groups and financial donors. It appears that the state of Nebraska was selected by these groups to try out this Amendment because it was believed that it was most likely to pass in this state.

Indeed, it already came close to doing so. In the run-up for the 2006 elections, hundreds of thousands of dollars in out-of-state support enabled "Nebraskans for Humane Care" to pay an army of signature collectors to canvas the state. They came close to getting the necessary number of signatures to move the Amendment directly onto the ballot. But a re-count caused them to fall just short. Since then, "Nebraskans for Humane Care" has gone to court asking that the decision that the petition fell short of the required signatures be overturned. A June 2007 hearing date is anticipated. If the court finds in favor of "Nebraskans for Humane Care," the Amendment will automatically appear on the 2008 ballot.

The Center for Health Policy and Ethics has critically analyzed the text of the Amendment. Both a short and a more detailed response to this Amendment can be found on the Center's website at: <http://chpe.creighton.edu/publications/statements.htm>. Faculty members have been giving presentations on the implications of the proposed Amendment and will continue to do so. Upcoming talks on the proposed "Humane Care Amendment" include:

Dr. Jos Welie

March 20: 4:30-5:30 pm, New Cassel Retirement Center, 900 No. 90 Street, Omaha

Organized by the Midlands Chapter of the Nebraska Alzheimer's Association. For more info, contact [carol.feelhaver@midlandsalz.org](mailto:carol.feelhaver@midlandsalz.org)

Dr. Jos Welie

April 13: 10:30-11:15 am. UNO Alumni House, 60 and Dodge Street, Omaha

Lecture is part of the "Dementia Educational Series," sponsored by the Midlands Chapter of the Nebraska Alzheimer's Association and UNMC Division of Geriatric Psychiatry. For more info, contact [carol.feelhaver@midlandsalz.org](mailto:carol.feelhaver@midlandsalz.org)

Dr. Jos Welie

Friday, November 9, 2007: 8:00am-12:00 pm, Georgetowne Club

2440 S. 141st Circle, Omaha, NE

Nebraska Nursing Leadership Coalition Conference: "End of Life Desires with Humane Care"

Dr. Jos Welie

November 28, 2007: 11:00-12:00 am, Grissom Conference Room (5412)

UNMC, Omaha, NE

Psychiatry Grand Rounds

## **New Faces: Introducing Christine "Chris" Jorgensen--CHPE's New Technical Specialist**

*by Marybeth Goddard*

The Center for Health Policy and Ethics is happy to announce the addition of Christine "Chris" Jorgensen as the Center's new Technical Specialist. In 2003, Chris received her Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois. Chris has eight years of library experience including positions held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum and, most recently, at Creighton's Reinert-Alumni Library in the role of Reference and Web Services Librarian. Chris is active in the Nebraska Library Association and currently volunteers her time and expertise to them in the capacity of Webmaster.



Chris and her husband, Matt, are the proud parents of two-year-old Ruby. In her "spare" time Chris enjoys reading, politics, and participating as a co-leader in a local attachment parenting group.

*Chris Jorgensen, Technical Specialist,  
Center for Health Policy & Ethics*

Welcome, Chris!

## Recent Publications by CHPE Faculty, Associates, and Affiliates

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