

An Introduction to the Code of Ethical Standards

Rev Kevin McGovern, Sr Carol Ong RSM & Dr Mark Lubliner:
Medical Directors Face-to-Face Meeting,
St John of God Health Care,
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Centre for Health Ethics

Our Moral Sense



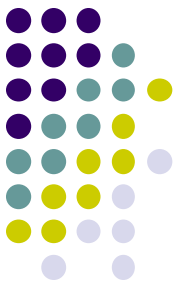
Our Sense of Sight

- sees light
- a complex sense
- some are blind
- innate and present from birth
- developmental: our capacity to see and perceive develops throughout life



Our Moral Sense

- ‘sees’ values, right & wrong
- another complex sense
- some lack a moral sense (e.g. psychopaths...)
- innate and present from birth
- developmental: our capacity to perceive values also develops throughout life



Ethics

- ethics = study of our moral sense
- many different approaches and theories: Ethical Relativism, Objectivism, Divine Command Ethics, Principlism, Casuistry, Deontology, Natural Law, Human Rights, Utilitarianism/Consequentialism, Ethic of Care, Virtue Ethics, Communitarianism...
- *The Blind Men and the Elephant.*
- “... Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!”



Four Principles of Biomedical Ethics



- Beauchamp and Childress (7th ed, 2013):
 - Respect for Autonomy
 - Nonmaleficence
 - Beneficence
 - Justice



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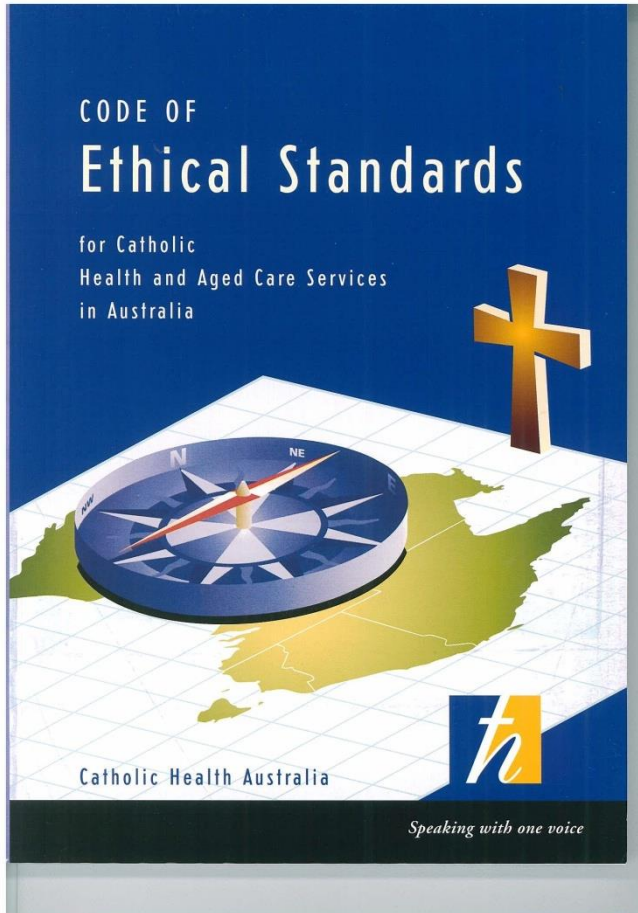
Values and Ethics

- Values
 - ↓
- Principles
 - ↓
- Guidelines
 - ↓
- Decisions about cases
 - not 'mathematical'
 - requires prudence & discernment





Code of Ethical Standards



- 100 pages
- Part I: Seven Values
- Part II: Guidelines in Eight Areas
- Index: 14 pages



Code of Ethical Standards



- Part I is about Basic Principles/ Values/ Guiding Beliefs;
- Part II is about Specific Issues/ Guidelines/ Daily Practices:
 - Guidelines without values are blind;
 - values without guidelines are lame.

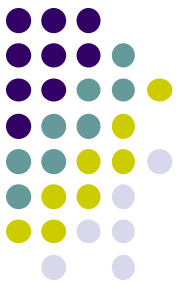


Part I: Principles



1. Respect for persons within a culture of life
 - The foundation of our moral vision is the inherent dignity of each and every human person, no matter how frail or disabled or vulnerable we might be.

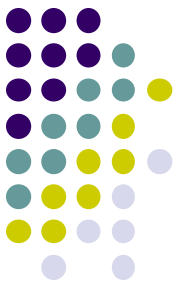




Part I: Principles (cont'd)

2. Health care and the mission of the Church
3. The goals of health care
4. Justice in health care
5. Collaboration in health and aged care
6. Respect for personal embodiment
7. Solidarity and the mystery of suffering and death
 - “Catholic health and aged care services should be marked by a material and spiritual solidarity with people who are sick, disabled, frail, elderly or dying...” (*Code*, p. 9)





Part II: Guidelines

1. Decision Making in Health Care
2. Human Sexuality, Procreation & the Beginning of Life
3. Respect for Bodily Integrity
4. Older Persons and Those with Special Needs
5. End of Life
6. Research
7. Healthcare Institutions
8. Cooperation with Others
 - Index (pp. 69–82)



Where Do You Get It?



- Go to the Publications page on the **Catholic Health Australia** website: <http://www.cha.org.au/publications.html>
- You can order a print copy using the online form. SJGHC is a CHA member which belongs to the Australian Catholic GST Religious Group. Tick the appropriate boxes in the form, and you will pay \$20 (incl. postage & handling). (If you don't tick the boxes, it costs \$32.)
- You can download an electronic copy for free.
- You can then print a copy, and an organisation like Officeworks will bind it nicely for less than \$5.
- If you don't have a copy of the Code, please make sure that you get one.



Chisholm Health Ethics



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