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Bioethical Issues around the Globe

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Editorial address:
Prof. Darryl Macer, Director, Eubios Ethics Institute,
c/o Center for Ethics of Science and Technology,
Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Email: darryl@eubios.info

Editorial: Bioethical Issues around the Globe

This first issue of volume 23 includes a series of papers on health care ethics from around the globe, exploring some of the similarities faced by patients, doctors, and citizens in countries such as Australia, Brazil, Iran, Japan, Mexico and Nigeria. One of the basic questions of bioethics is about decision making. Cerdán et al., conducted a survey in Mexico of who decides? The role of the family in the informed decision in Mexican cancer patients. Oluwaseun Adeola Adenugba from Nigeria discusses the Epistemological Importance of Informed Consent in Clinical Research, and the rationale can be applied to any country and community. The case presented could also be seen in many countries of Asia-Pacific, and every other continent.

Atsushi Asai and Kenji Miki present a case study concerning privacy in the care of patients with HIV in Japan. Breach of privacy of patients is a form of malpractice and should be sanctioned. Medical malpractice: analysis of professional ethical processes in Paraiba, Brazil by Maria de Fátima Oliveira dos Santos et al. reports on the way that such breaches of good practice are regulated in Brazil. Nader Ghotbi describes ambiguity in the fatwahs that people follow in Iran, and affects the ethics of reproductive medicine in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Having many different sources of authority provides flexibility to patients with different decisions, but some would claim it is difficult to regulate. How far should we allow the exercise of informed decision making in societies so that people can have a child?

The premise of education also hopes that learners will be in a good state to learn. Susannah Tye, Wilhelmina van Rooy and Irina Pollard surveyed students in Australia and in their paper “Drug and Alcohol Use, Sexual Intimacy and Associated Health Status of Senior High School Students: Implications for Learning and Schooling” they find that a number of students may not be in a good state to study, nor make good decisions even if they had learnt the basics of decision making.

Annaswamy Nalini from India emphasizes the importance of humanism in medicine, and considers this as the main premise for rethinking medical ethics education. Medical education is important for health care workers to be able to relate properly to patients and provide informed consent.

We hope that scholars and policy makers from around the world will join the 14th Asian Bioethics Conference: Ethics in Emerging Technologies to Make Lives Better Together. It will be held during 19-23 November 2013 in Chennai, India, and for those who have not been to Southern India before, there are also plenty of smaller towns and countryside that can be visited before or after the conference. The 14th Asian Bioethics Conference 2013 will be hosted by the All India Association of Bioethics (AIBA) in collaboration with Loyola Institute of Frontier Energy (LIFE), Loyola College and Loyola-ICAM College of Enginerring and Technology (LICET), Loyola Campus.

Please renew your Asian Bioethics Association subscriptions for 2013! New articles are welcome from around the world. – Darryl Macer