



Podcasting in Clinical Bioethics Education for the Internal Medicine Clerkship

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UC DAVIS
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Bioethics
Podcast Series

Introduction

Bioethics education in the medical school setting is typically done in the pre-clinical years, with a basic discussion of principles and perhaps a few case discussions. However, there is little practical ethics education in the clinical setting (during the 3rd and 4th years), where medical students are actually involved in the care of patients where there are often ethical issues at play. There is a need for focused ethics instruction to complement clinical learning and help support continued ethical and professional development during the third-year.

The purpose of this study is to use real patient cases from the medicine wards to increase students' awareness of ethical issues comfort in discussing these issues with peers and supervisors.

Study Aims:

- To develop a brief ethics educational intervention for the Internal Medicine clerkship
- To evaluate the impact of the intervention on ethics education in three domains for 3rd-year medical students: (1) awareness of bioethical issues at the macro level (ie, understanding ethical issues in medicine as a whole), (2) awareness of bioethical questions at the micro level (ie, as they pertain to patients on their team), and (3) the level of comfort negotiating issues of bioethics with peers, supervisors, and patients (primary outcome).

Methods

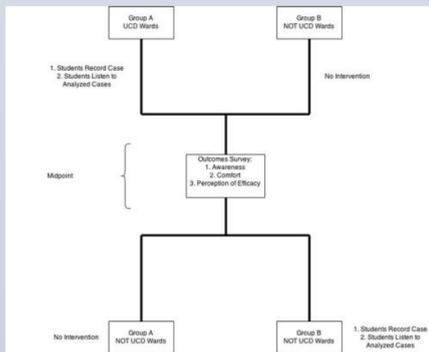
Educational Intervention

(a) During the UCD Wards experience, each student will be asked to identify and briefly describe a patient case involving an ethical dilemma. The case will be reported as a 2-5 minute summary, recorded and submitted to the clerkship coordinator. The structure of the report will be as follows:

- Patient Identifier
- Basic Clinical Information (hospital course, etc.)
- Description of the ethical question
- Student discussion of the ethical issues

(b) Recordings will be submitted for ethical analysis by an "expert" in clinical bioethics, who will record a brief commentary about the case.

(c) These recordings will be combined into podcasts that will then be published on iTunes and the Internal Medicine website as podcasts



Rationale

The rationale behind using podcasts as our education intervention is as follows:

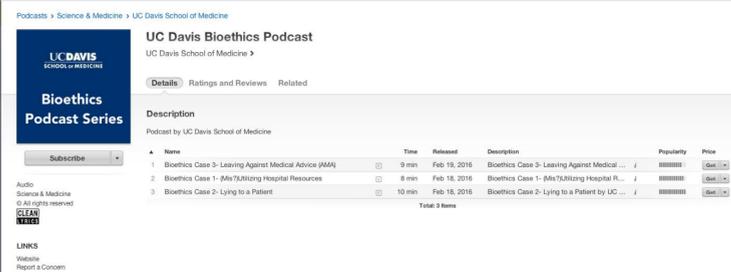
- Asking students to create recordings of cases they have seen increases their awareness of ethical issues as they are looking for new cases to record
- Asking students to analyze the cases in their recording pushes them to analyze ethical dilemmas on their own
- Faculty commentary allows students to learn from experts in the field
- Publication on iTunes allows for public dissemination and learning opportunities for students on future clerkships and at other schools

Product

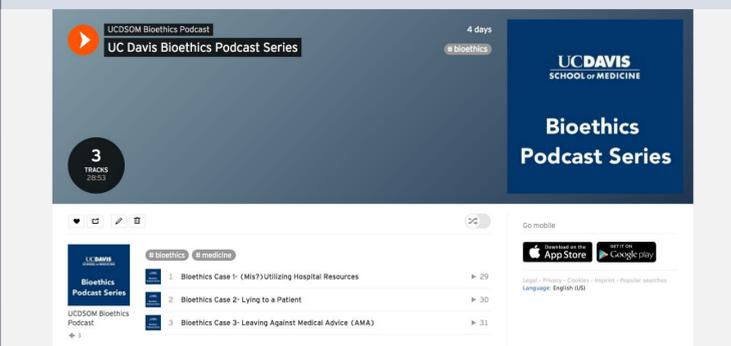
As of the time of this publication, 9 unique ethics cases have been submitted over the course of 3 clerkships. All of these recordings have been submitted to expert faculty for commentary, with 3 podcasts completed and published.

These 3 podcasts are currently available for public consumption on iTunes and Soundcloud.

iTunes:



Soundcloud:



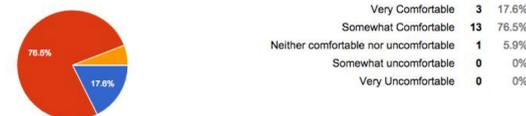
Results

As of the time of publication, data collection is complete for 3 clerkships. Survey participation was poor, with 17 responses out of 52 clerkship participants (33% completion rate). Of these 17 responses, only 5 (29%) were from students receiving the intervention prior to the survey (Group A, on UCD Wards the first month) making comparisons across groups impossible. In addition, due to unforeseen circumstances with regards to logistics of the clerkship, the two groups became unblinded and all students received the intervention at the very beginning of the clerkship. Therefore, some data from the clerkship group as a whole is pertinent.

How comfortable do you feel recognizing ethical issues in medicine?



How comfortable do you feel recognizing ethical issues in your own clinical practice?



How effective was the ethics case project in helping you to recognize ethical issues in medicine?



How effective was the ethics case project in helping you to recognize ethical issues in your clinical practice?



Discussion

Due to limited sample, poor survey participation, and confounding factors leading to unblinding of groups, few conclusions can be gleaned from the data collected at this time. However, the study has produced a tangible product that received positive feedback from medical students on the clerkship.

While we cannot draw any strong conclusions from the data, there are a few signs that show some promise for future study. Of the students who participated in the survey, 60% stated that the project was either somewhat effective or very effective in helping to recognize ethical issues in their own clinical practice. With some adjustments to method accounting for logistics of the clerkship, this study could show significant findings in the future.

Conclusion

This UC Davis Bioethics Podcast Series is a growing library of podcasts consisting of real cases from the UC Davis wards produced by third-year medical students and with commentary from UC Davis faculty. The series is an innovative way to encourage students to be cognizant of ethical questions during their rotations, as well as a tool for both their own and other students' ethics education. We are excited to see this series continue to grow both at UC Davis and elsewhere.

Links

Please listen to the podcast on iTunes or SoundCloud!

iTunes:

UC Davis Bioethics Podcast Series
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/uc-davis-bioethics-podcast/id1085785848?mt=2>

SoundCloud:

UC Davis Bioethics Podcast Series
<https://soundcloud.com/uc-davis-bioethics-podcas/sets/uc-davis-bioethics-podcast-series>