

### In conclusion

These then are the main points of the new discussion papers. As an author of one of them, it would not be appropriate for me to offer a critique, but perhaps I may set them in a wider context. The New Zealand debate is one which is echoed in many other countries with developed health care systems. All are asking the same questions about limiting provision to meet finite resources in as fair a manner as possible. However, the core debate in New Zealand has some unique features. Few, if any, countries have attempted so ambitious a debate. Our Health Minister is required to hear the advice of the committee (though not necessarily to follow it), and this advice is based on both expert opinion and public consultation. The Committee has released documents which put the theoretical issues into the public arena and it will be running workshops (with assistance from the Bioethics Centre) on these issues to involve a selection of different groups from high school pupils to the elderly and with attention to cultural diversity. Although Oregon attempted public consultation and the Netherlands government sought Bioethics input for *Choices in Health Care*, these have been passing phenomena. The Dutch Report has not been adopted by the Government, and the Oregon experiment remains locked in controversy. (In the USA as a whole, we await the conclusions of Hillary Clinton's marathon consultation!) In the UK the government has kept its distance from any debate of the ethics of resource allocation, leaving it to the regional authorities to work out their own salvation as best they may.

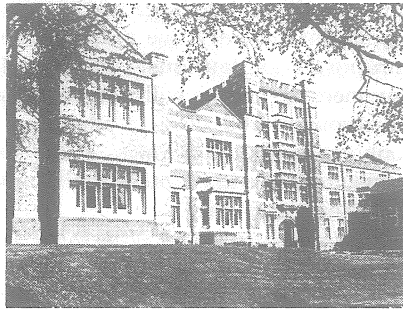
Thus, whatever the limitations of these documents, it seems that they nonetheless hold a unique place, as ethical guidance for both communal consultation and government decisionmaking. This puts New Zealand in a leading position. One may hope that, whatever Government holds power after this year's election, this notable attempt to bring the ethics of health care into the public arena will be continued. The "core" may be something of a Holy Grail, but is surely nonetheless a quest worth pursuing.

**Note:** Copies of the papers referred to above may be obtained from the Core Services Committee, PO Box 5013, Wellington.

## INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON BIOETHICS

**P**lanning for the Centre's International Seminar on Bioethics, which takes place at Knox College in November, is well underway and the provisional programme is now available.

The first half of the week will concentrate on clinical and research issues while the second will focus on priorities in health care. It will be possible to register for the whole week or for either segment.



Sessions have been planned in a variety of formats ranging from lectures to "hypotheticals". The latter involves the presentation of a series of hypothetical case studies to a panel who then give comment. The Centre has run hypotheticals on a variety of topics, as lunchtime forums, and they have attracted a lot of interest. There will also be workshops, small discussion groups, two slots for the presentation of research papers and even some sightseeing time!

Eighteen board members of the International Association of Bioethics are now confirmed to speak, and there will also be a strong New Zealand presence with speakers representing, among others, nurses, patient advocates and hospital management.

After the registration and welcome on Monday 22 November the first sessions get underway in the afternoon. There will be two sessions running concurrently - one on Coma, Dying and Death discussing such issues as the withdrawal of treatment in comatose patients, euthanasia, and refusing life saving treatment. The other, Genetic Research, will focus on the ethical issues which arise out of mapping the human genome.

Tuesday begins with another choice of sessions for registrants. Assisted Reproductive Technology (a look at the questions surrounding the growth of treatments for infertility) and Research and Impaired Consent (what principles should apply when patients, for whatever reason, are unable to give informed consent to research?). The sessions will be followed by workshops on the same topics.

Later in the day there will be two "hypothetical" sessions. One is titled Perinatal, how far should we go to save lives of children with severe birth crises possibly leading to multiple disabilities? The other concerns the ethical questions surrounding the treatment of AIDS and STDs.

The Seminar then breaks into small discussion groups, followed by an opportunity for participants to present research papers. The president of the IAB board, Peter Singer, will give a public lecture that evening on Animal Rights.

The final sessions of the first segment take place on Wednesday 24 November. Again there will be two concurrent sessions with one taking the form of a debate on Ethics Committees - are they needed and are they effective? The other is a "hypothetical" on Psychiatric Illness.

A workshop on Feminist Approaches to Ethics will follow.

The afternoon sees the beginning of the second segment which focuses on prioritising in health. The first session in this half of the week will be a slightly more informal one, a symposium on Ethics in a Multicultural Context. In the evening Irihapeti Ramsden will give a public lecture on Maori Health Issues.

Thursday begins with Markets, Standards and Rationing of Health Care. What ethical principles should operate in professional standard setting and discipline, and should these apply to administrators as well as to traditional health care professionals?

The main session in the afternoon takes a look at prioritising in health care - if health care has to be rationed how should this be done? It will include presentations on the Oregon experience of rationing and the British QALYs model.

There will then be another opportunity for delegates to present research papers, and in the evening Dan Wikler will give a public lecture on American Health Care Post Clinton.

Who owns health information, who should have access to it and what uses of health care information are legitimate? These will be some of the questions addressed at Friday's first session on Information Use. A series of workshops follows, and a final session on ethical concerns in research and development.

There will then be a chance to savour the delights of Dunedin before the plenary lecture on scientific advances and human rights. When the lecture concludes buses will leave for Larnach Castle, the venue for the end of Seminar dinner.

Registrations are beginning to come in from as far afield as the United States but there are still places left. If you are interested in attending the Seminar please contact Teresa Wyndham-Smith at the Bioethics Centre, Ph 03 474 7678 or fax 03 474 7601.

### Visitors to the Centre

In June, the Centre hosted a visit from Loane Skene, Principal Research Officer of the Victorian Law Reform Commission, and Chairperson of the Australian Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching. Her paper on "Perspectives on Animal Research" stimulated an interesting discussion.

In August, Professor Barry Hoffmaster visited the Centre and gave a lecture on "Two Concepts of Morality". Professor Hoffmaster is Professor of Philosophy and Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada.

### Staff Activities

In addition to regular teaching, research and ethics committee commitments, Centre staff have been involved in a range of seminar and lecture work outside the university.

Professor Campbell's work has included presenting papers at Auckland Medical School's 25th Jubilee, the Renal Society Conference, and the NZ Gastronurses Conference. While overseas in August he addressed the International Academy of Practical Theology at Princeton, and the Ethics in Medicine Conference at Kings College, London.

Associate Professor Grant Gillett has addressed the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Australasian Neuroscience Nurses and Neurosurgical Conferences, and been a respondent at the Theology and Science Symposium in Dunedin.

Barbara Nicholas and associate staff member Gareth Jones participated in seminars on Science and Ethics organised by the New Zealand Institute of Agricultural Science. Barbara also presented a paper at the Women and Science Conference, and the Public Health Association National Conference.

## Study Opportunities for 1994

The Bioethics Centre is offering a range of study opportunities in 1994, including a new qualification, the **Master in Health Sciences**. Depending on qualifications this degree will be of one or two year's of study. Candidates for this degree may be university graduates, or people holding a suitable health professional qualification.

A new course is being offered for undergraduate study. *Introduction to Bioethics* is a third year paper, covering a range of theoretical approaches to Bioethics and in-depth exploration of selected topics. This course will be of interest to students specialising in health sciences or philosophy.

The Centre continues to offer its other courses. The **Diploma for Graduates** attracts a range of health professionals and graduates wishing to extend their qualifications, while supervision is offered for doctoral study (Ph.D), the Masters in Medical Science (M.MedSc) and the Bachelor of Medical Science (B.MedSc).

Any enquiries can be made to Professor A. V. Campbell, PO Box 913, Dunedin.

## Calendar

### Health Care Ethics Forum March 19-20, 1994, Washington, D.C.

A yearly 2-day interdisciplinary forum on the most burning issues, current wisdom, knowledge and experience in health care ethics. Co-sponsored by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses and the Society of Critical Care Medicine.

Contact: AACN-Critical Care, 101 Columbia, Aliso, Viejo,  
CA 92656, 1-800-899-2226 (Fax) 1-714-362-2020

### The 10th World Congress on Medical Law 28 August-1 September 1994, Jerusalem Ramada Congress Center, Israel

Organised by the World Association for Medical Law on all aspects of Medical Law  
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