

ETHICS & RESILIENCE GRAND ROUNDS

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Ethical Care of Uninsured Patients: Balancing Patient Need and Organizational Stewardship

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March 18, 2026 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm



Delivering non-urgent care to uninsured patients often results in uncompensated costs, resource strain, and difficulty prioritizing care equitably amid limited funding and capacity. Healthcare organizations face the challenge of balancing moral obligations to provide care with real-world constraints. However, not providing care to uninsured patients may result in poor outcomes and cause moral distress to clinicians who feel a duty to care for these patients. This presentation will explore a response to this challenge that is grounded in ethical values, principles and transparent process.

Objectives:

- Understand the ethical considerations involved in responding to requests for non-emergent care for uninsured patients.
- Appreciate how organizational protocols help staff balance moral obligations to patients with competing operational and financial interests.
- Describe steps in navigating requests for non-emergent care from uninsured patients.

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Questions? Contact Sue Pantitis ext. 73661 or pantitis@hhsc.ca