Author's response to reviews

Title: Comparison of Ethical Judgment exhibited by Clients and Ethics Consultants in Japan

Authors:

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

We have revised to ask you to consider the enclosed article “Comparison of Ethical Judgment exhibited by Clients and Ethics Consultants in Japan” for publication in BMC Medical Ethics.

The study examines the activities of Clinical Ethics Consultation (CEC) in Japan to identify differences in the ethical judgment of clients and consultants. Though the CEC activities have been discussed many times especially in western countries, empirical studies dealing with differences between clients and CECs are relatively scarce. We have previously reported on a CEC activity and needs of CEC from hospitals in Japan. (Fukuyama and et al, J Med Ethics (2008), Nagao and et al, Journal of Japan Association for Bioethics (2005).) However, there is less study reports to compare and contrast of clinicians with clinical ethics consultants. We conducted qualitative and quantitative study design which examines the request and response documents of all 60 cases requested between October 2006 and the end of October 2011. We classified the presence/absence of decisional capacity in the patient, and the difference between the client’s judgment and the CEC recommendations, using content analysis.

Your journal, widely read in the field of medical ethics, would be an ideal forum for this new study which breaks new ground in comparing client and consultant. We feel that this study will add new perspectives promote discourse on the important issues raised concerning clinical ethics consultation.

We warrant that the manuscript comprises original, unpublished material; is not under consideration for publication elsewhere; we have no financial interests or conflict of interest in connection with this paper. This activity was reviewed and approved by the research ethics committee at the Kumamoto University Graduate School of Medical Science. And we analyzed information from either the request forms sent to the team or from the recommendation forms sent to the clients as second use, approved by the ethics committee at Kobe University.

The Clinical Ethic Support/Education Project was performed as part of “A Research Project to Develop Patient-Healthcare Professional Relationships for Health Care Thinking Together” Basic Research (A) #20249035, a Grant-In-Aid for scientific research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2008-2010. The study was supported in part by a Grant-In-Aid Young Scientists (B) #21792178 from the Japan Society for Research.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

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