

# Institutional Integrity and Organization Ethics.

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# Starting Assumptions :

*Car dealer vs. KCMC ER/Casualty*

# What is Ethics?

- ▶ **Ethics** is the study of who **we ought** to be (how we should make decision, act) in light of our **identity**.

*What is your identity as an administrator, clinician, health care organization or system etc. What words best describe your professional identity?*



# Distinguishing between Clinical and Institutional ethics

- ▶ Clinical Ethics is an interdisciplinary activity to identify ,analyze and resolve ethical problems that arises in the **care of particular patient**. The major thrust of clinical ethics is to work for outcomes that best serve the interests and welfare of patients and their families.*[J. Fletcher, The Bioethics Movement and Hospital Ethics Committees, Maryland Law Review 50 (1991):859n, note 1.]*

# Organizational Ethics

- ▶ The intentional use of values to **guide** the decisions of a system.
- ▶ Objective: strong “FIT” between the system’s stated mission and decision making at all levels of the system



# What is moral agency?

**Responsiveness** **Motivation** **Valuing**  
**Character**  
**Moral**  
**Accountability** **Reasoning** **Discernment**  
**Sensibility**

# Moral agency cont.....

- ▶ Is the capacity to habitually act in an ethical manner. It entails a certain set of competencies in matters ethical as well as moral character and motivation.
  - 1. Moral Sensibility
  - 2. Moral Responsiveness
  - 3. Moral Reasoning
  - 5. Moral Accountability
  - 6. Moral Character
  - 7. Moral Motivation
  - 8. Moral Valuing
- ▶ **9. Transformative Moral Leadership:** Commitment and proven ability to create a culture which facilitates the exercise of moral agency , a culture in which people do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.



# Who or What exercise Moral Agency?

- ▶ An Individual
- ▶ Individuals in relation (the moral agency of collectiveness)
- ▶ Individuals in relation within institutions (the moral agency of health care community)
- ▶ Individuals in relation within institutions within particular societies and cultures.



# What is Moral Integrity?

## ► *Integrity:*

1. soundness of and adherence to moral principle and character; uprightness and honesty.
2. the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished.
3. a sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition. (*From Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*)



# How does one become a person(professional,institution/system,country) of Integrity

- ▶ Commitment to developing and owning a conception of the Good, the Good life.
- ▶ “Practicing, valuing, choosing and acting accordance to one’s conception of what fidelity to the good life demands
- ▶ Authenticity check!
- ▶ The importance of culture.....culture
- ▶ Ability to rely on good people within the profession/institution/system to act morally

# Organization Ethics...the big Picture

- ▶ Is a work in Progress
- ▶ It is about organization integrity(doesn't just happen)... It requires:
  - ❑ an intentional ,persistence focus on the moral dimensions of organization's purpose,function,people,systems structures decisions and their consequences
  - ❑ Moral astute, courageous leadership(board,senior managemnt,middle management) that creates an organizational culture characterized by openness,honesty,trust,mutual respect

# Organization ethics....the big picture

- ❑ Leaders who recognize challenges to integrity and are able and willing to respond
- ❑ Leaders who expect individuals throughout the organization to hold one another accountable(**Accountability**)
- ❑ Leaders who expect creativity and risk taking throughout the organization
- ❑ Leaders who recognize and act on the organization's obligations to the community and its responsibility for sound public policy

# Organization ethics: Facilitating variables

- ▶ Leadership must value institutional integrity and communicate this clearly: senior leadership must be “on board”
- ▶ The institutional mission, vision and values must be known and alive
- ▶ Perception that it is safe to explore areas of conflict /concern and that it is **ok** for people to disagree
- ▶ The institution culture must support folks doing the right things, because it's the right thing to do(**Avoid 5 words..everybody else is doing it**)
- ▶ A critical mass within the institution must be recognized for their moral agency
- ▶ Institutional ethics resources must be available and utilized.

# Organization ethics: Constraining variables

- ▶ Leadership failure to value institutional integrity
- ▶ Belief that ethics is a matter of opinion
- ▶ Ethics is “one more program/initiative”

# Conclusion..

- ▶ We(those who design,deliver,finance,and evaluate health care) are all MEMBERS of moral community engaged in moral work.
- ▶ The grounding for our moral obligations is the fact that:
  - The service we provide is necessary to human health and wellbeing(therefore the obligation of moral society)
  - The parties in health care relationships are unequal resulting in the need for trust vs. contractual relationship
- ▶ Thus there is a need for ethical competence and leadership as well as financial,legal,clinical etc competence and leadership.
- ▶ Moral agency should be a criteria for hiring,advancement,rewards,firing.....
- ▶ Presuming that all parties involved in healthcare are moral and thus ethical matters will "take care of themselves" isn't working .



- ▶ *Who Do You say you are? And, does people get from you what you say you are?*

Thank You

