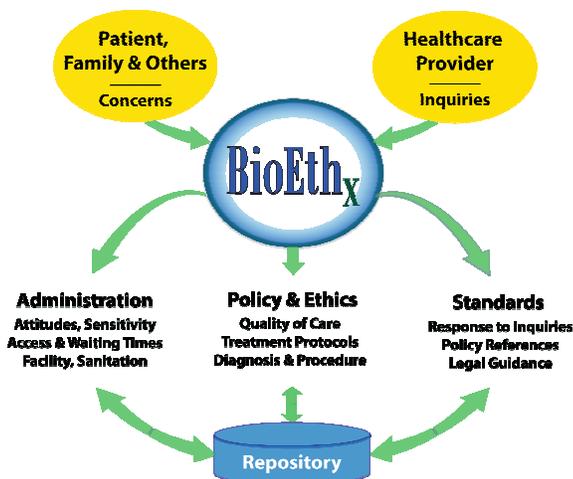


Public awareness of bioethics issues has escalated rapidly over the last decade in concert with scientific advances in biotechnology and the proliferation of patient treatment options. This awareness generates increasing demand for effective identification and resolution of ethics concerns in the clinical setting. Healthcare providers are faced with a growing volume of ethics issues but have no advanced tools to help manage issues to resolution and improved outcomes.

This growing demand can now be addressed by BioEthx™, a web-based online service that specifically supports ethics committees and their management of ethics consultations. For the first time, these specialists can make meaningful use of information technology to augment electronic health records and help improve quality of patient care in accordance with the goals of Title XIII of Public Law 111-5, the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) Act and JCAHO accreditation requirements.

The BioEthx™ service supports the management of ethics consultations from initial event and information capture through resolution and follow-up evaluation. It provides an effective and easy-to-use tool for managing the workflow of ethics consultations in accordance with established procedures and to fully document case history and the analytical process. It is available to all for a modest monthly subscription fee.



### Benefits

- Improve quality of care & outcomes
- Comply with established ethics policies
- Improve responsiveness & efficiency
- Create archive for training & planning
- Support resolution of disputes
- Reduce risks & costs

### Improving Quality of Care

In the clinical setting, patients, family members, clergy and other interested parties are all consumers of services delivered by the healthcare provider. Delivering quality healthcare services to these stakeholders relies upon the caregiver's compassionate response to requests and concerns voiced by patients and their advocates. Ethics issues that arise during provision of healthcare services generally fall into one of two distinct categories.

**Clinical** – Clinical ethics issues are those directly related to an active clinical case and specific patient. BioEthx provides a comprehensive, step-by-step workflow framework for capturing relevant information and guiding less experienced consultants through a recommended process toward issue resolution. The process improves communication among consultants and supports collaborative behavior to maximize effectiveness of outcomes.

**Organizational** – Organizational ethics issues are those that do not involve a patient. They may include interpretation of ethics policy, development of new policies, assessment and redesign of workflow processes or the remediation of situations that affect organizational performance. BioEthx offers a concise process for handling these non-clinical issues as well.

Whether clinical or organizational, BioEthx helps improve quality of patient care by promoting efficiency, completeness, accuracy, and increased communication among ethics consultation staff.

## Clinical Case Workflow

- Receive / assess request or concern
- Consult with expert sources
- Review applicable documentation
- Communicate with stakeholders
- Document and deliver responses
- Conduct independent evaluation

## About The System

The BioEthx online system is accessed through a standard web browser. With minimal training, hospital and clinic staff can create a record of an expressed concern or a request for action. The system then becomes a valuable tool to guide the workflow required to properly handle the issue, supporting the inclusion of additional specialists and promoting collaboration among consultation team members to work towards an optimal outcome.

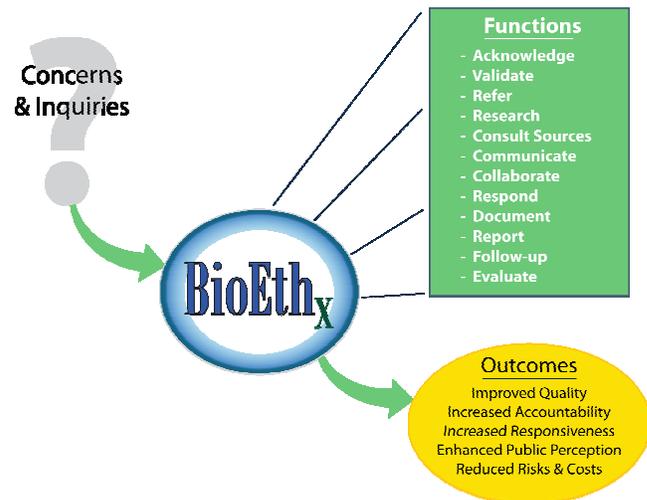
**Workflow** – Clinical consults can involve multiple internal and external stakeholders, requirements for short-term decision making regarding patient care, and difficult moral deliberations that lead to greater complexity. Completing this process can be a challenge for less experience ethicists. The clinical consult in BioEthx is presented as a multi-step workflow process designed to foster efficiency, accuracy and completeness. Navigation among the workflow steps is simple and easy to accomplish. More experienced consultants can take advantage of shortcuts to enter consult information quickly and efficiently. The system ensures that a critical set of information has been completed before a consultation can be closed and evaluated.

**Collaboration** – BioEthx maintains a roster of all individuals within an organization that are qualified to become involved in ethics consultations. An administrator or ethics consultant can create a new consult record and designate a primary consultant and, as appropriate, choose other individuals from the roster for inclusion on the consultation team. The system can issue notifications via email or text message to advise consultants of referrals, reminders and planned activities. This improved collaboration can lead to more efficient consult execution and more timely responses in time-sensitive consults.

**Evaluation** – Once an active consultation is closed, a final workflow step is enabled in which an assigned evaluator reviews the consultation record and optionally interacts with stakeholders to ensure quality control, staff accountability and identification of opportunities for improvement. Evaluation results are then also stored with the consultation record.

**Knowledge Management** - The system creates a repository of information on how specific cases were handled and allows for the “tagging” of cases according to a classification scheme. When policy and relevant reference material is included in the repository, it becomes the body of knowledge useful as a reference for future cases. Over time, the aggregate information collected in the knowledge base can support important research and improved education in the healthcare ethics consultation discipline.

**Security & Privacy** – Security capabilities are built into the system to control system access and the assignment of roles and responsibilities to each authorized user. The system is HIPAA-compliant and covered by a Business Associate Agreement (BAA).



## Summary

Healthcare ethics is an emerging discipline that is here to stay. High profile cases popularized in the media have heightened the sensitivity of having a well-defined, structured process to review and assess each case or issue, drawing from lessons learned and knowledge of best practices. BioEthx is a complete tool that allows your organization to ensure that appropriate ethics protocols needed to provide quality healthcare and mitigate risk are applied to both clinical and organizational ethics cases.