

## 4 CME courses from the folks who wrote the book on medical ethics

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Just as clinical medicine is expected to address the full range of illnesses, medical ethics speaks to the vast array of professional situations physicians face. Four examples have been put together in a specially curated collection of medical ethics CME-eligible modules that tackle treatment and matters of professional conduct.

All the courses are drawn from the *AMA Code of Medical Ethics*. The original version was adopted at the AMA's first meeting in 1847. The code's roots stretch back to Hippocrates, but it is a living document, designed to apply well-tested fundamentals—articulated in the nine Principles of Medical Ethics—to a constantly changing medical environment.

The enduring, e-learning modules in this collection incorporate infographics, animation and scenario-based learning. All the courses are free to AMA members (\$20 dollars for nonmembers) and *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* is available.

**Ethics issues in organ donation.** This CME module is designed to familiarize physicians with fundamental ethical issues of informed consent, voluntariness and conflict of interest. The course explains those issues in the context of increasing the supply of organs available for donation and transplantation. The *Code of Medical Ethics* devotes an entire chapter to the subject.

**Boundaries for physicians.** Addressing a more common challenge than some physicians might think, this CME module covers a wide array of problematic scenarios, such as:

- Sexual and romantic involvement with patients, former patients, key third parties, and medical trainees. Identification and practices for maintaining professional boundaries with regards to treating family, self and colleagues
- Identification and practices for maintaining professional boundaries with patients in the areas of political communications, receiving gifts, soliciting contributions, and social media.

**Informed consent and decision-making.** Three self-paced micro-modules guide physicians through the process of informed consent in standard and special situations, and when a patient cannot give informed consent. Among the many situations addressed is the physician's role in pediatric decision-making.

**Physician wellness and professional conduct.** It has been estimated that about 15 percent of physicians, at some point in their careers, will be impaired by psychiatric illness, alcoholism or drug dependency. Twice that number of physicians reportedly has chosen not to report an impaired or incompetent colleague.

CME modules addresses physician ethical obligations to confront their own impairment and how to handle a situation when they witness it in a colleague.

The modules explore behaviors which fall short of meeting the ethical and professional obligation to practice medicine in a manner that supports the highest quality of patient care including. Those include:

- Practicing medicine while physically or mentally impaired
- Practicing medicine incompetently.
- Engaging in unethical or illegal behavior.
- Engaging in disruptive behavior.

The module also covers why doctors are ethically obliged to act when colleagues are practicing unsafely or unprofessionally.

The AMA Ed Hub offers a searchable library of more than 1,000 CME activities in areas such as digital health, communication skills, opioids and pain management.