

Fortnightly Digest by



Digest 67



Warm greetings!

We are pleased to bring you this fortnightly digest from the Health, Ethics and Law Institute (HEaL Institute) and the *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics* (IJME).

Newsletter Spotlight 1

[Strengthening autonomy in law and bioethics](#)

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INDIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICAL ETHICS

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FAILURE OF THE LAW TO UPHOLD ADOLESCENT BODILY AUTONOMY

N-of-1 clinical trials: An option for evaluating Ayurvedic drugs

Alleged fraud in Alzheimer Disease research

Rape survivors should have access to expedited abortion

Need for humane and respectful language in healthcare

The *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics* brings to you the [first issue of the year](#).

Striking a balance between protecting adolescents from sexual exploitation and empowering them by upholding their sexual and reproductive rights is the need of the hour. An editorial in this issue discusses the implications of the 22nd Law Commission's recommendations on the age of consent. A research article analyses how adolescents face obstacles in seeking abortion services, particularly in consensual sexual relationships, due to legal uncertainties and gaps. While another author explores the impact of mandatory reporting by healthcare professionals of the sexual offences against children.

A commentary analyses the benefits and harms of fortification of rice and its mandatory

imposition in public health programmes, while another discusses an alleged fraud in Alzheimer Disease research and its implications for the credibility of scientific research. A surgeon reflects on an ethical dilemma faced by him during a surgery when a treatment option conflicted with the religious beliefs of the patient.

Other contributions include a joint editorial by multiple journals on the impact of the climate crisis on health, a study on classification of sponsors in CTRI, use of N-of-1 clinical trials on Ayurvedic drugs, and more.

We thank all our readers, reviewers and contributors for their continued support to the journal over the years and wish them a peaceful and healthy 2024.

Online First from *IJME*

Anil, A. (2024). [On forensics and true crime](#). *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, January 20, 2024

Arawi, T. (2024). [War on healthcare services in Gaza](#). *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, January 17, 2024

Lexchin, J. (2024). [Opioid promotion in Canada: A narrative review](#). *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*, January 23, 2024

Announcement from the local and global peer community

Forthcoming conferences and webinar

[Building Partnerships to Advance Ethical Research: Collaborators, Communities & Companies](#) | University of Minnesota | February 28, 2024 | 9:00am to 3:00pm (Central Time)

[You Can't Have AI Safety without Inclusion](#) | University of Toronto | January 31, 2024 | 12:30 – 2:00 PM ET



[Intersex Does Not Refute The Sex Binary](#) | JCB Bioethics Seminar Series 2023-24 | January 31, 2024 | 4:00 – 5:00 PM ET

Concluded conferences and webinar

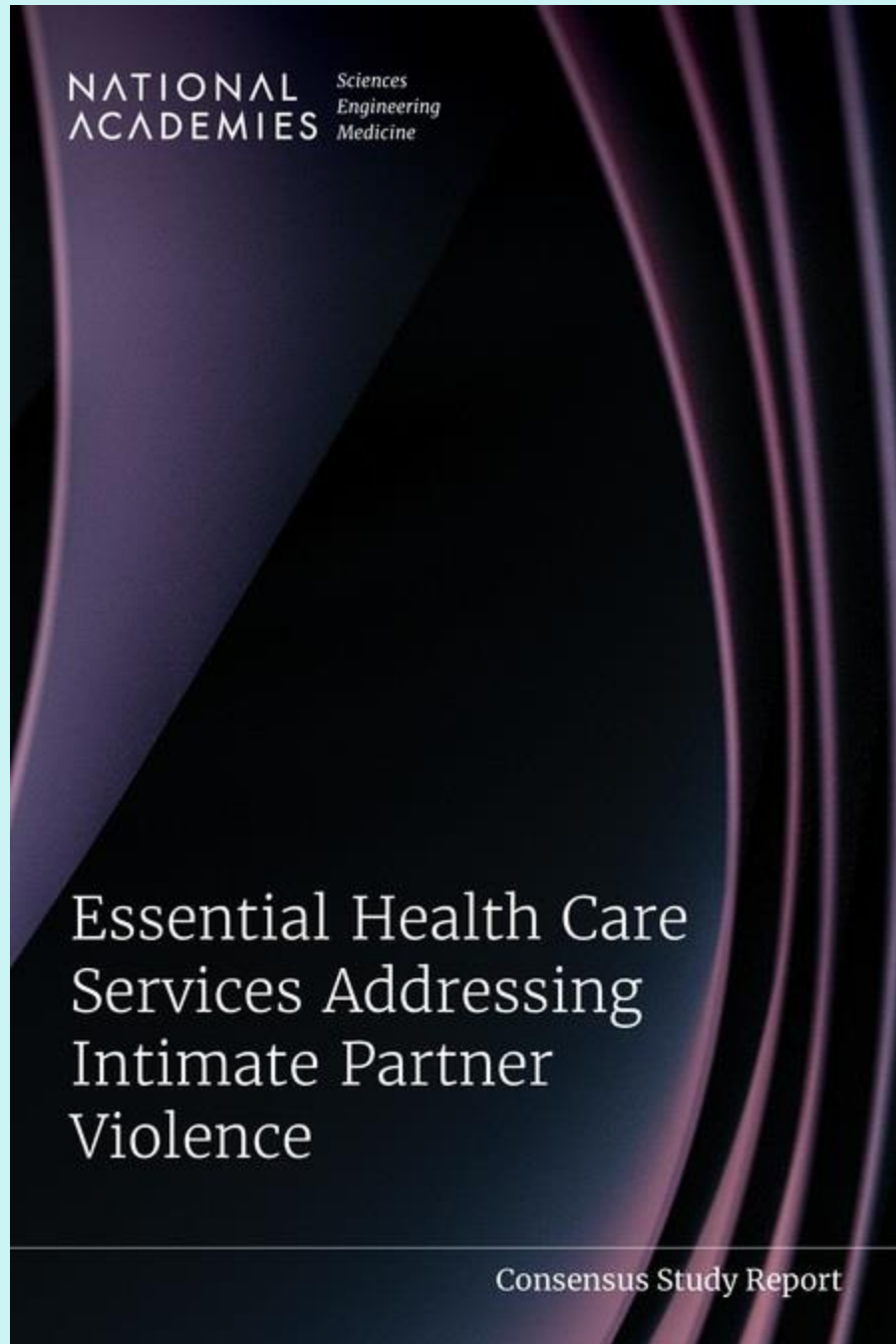


[Constructing an Ethics Framework for AI in Biomedical Research](#) | Vardit Ravitsky

Publications (academic and popular press) on bioethics, human rights, law and allied themes

Academic and popular press

Books/Reports



Public Health Research and Surveillance Priorities from the East Palestine Train Derailment

Proceedings of a Workshop—in Brief

On November 6–7, 2023, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine hosted a 2-day virtual public workshop on health research and surveillance priorities related to the East Palestine, Ohio, train derailment and hazardous material release that occurred on February 3, 2023.¹ The workshop was intended to explore potential human health impacts and lessons learned from the incident, focusing on research questions specific to affected communities in East Palestine and surrounding areas of Ohio and Pennsylvania. Kristen Malecki, a professor and the division director of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the University of Illinois Chicago, opened the workshop emphasizing the development of a research agenda responsive to community questions and concerns across hazards, exposures, risks, and health impacts to inform strategies for protecting residents now and in the future.

Richard Woychik, the director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Toxicology Program, urged participants to actively

discuss strategies such as characterizing exposures, determining appropriate health surveillance, examining acute and long-term health effects, and applying insights from prior transportation disasters to aid East Palestine. Discussions centered on perspectives on the impact of the incident, hazardous material exposures and risks, risk characterization and communication, and challenges in and strategies for addressing and monitoring long-term community health impacts. Dr. Woychik also urged for the development of very specific actions for all involved parties to take and address the challenges faced by the East Palestine community.

IMPACT OF THE EAST PALESTINE TRAIN DERAILMENT

This section covers the physical, emotional, and social impacts described by community members and local responders and providers after the derailment. It highlights the acute health symptoms, mental trauma, loss of trust, financial hardships, gaps in disaster preparedness, mental health care access, and uncertainties concerning long-term health risks reported in the community.

Community Member Perspectives

Panelists representing community perspectives described the physical, emotional, and social tolls that

¹ The workshop agenda and presentations are available at https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/40970_01-2023_public-health-research-and-surveillance-priorities-from-the-east-palestine-ohio-train-derailment-a-workshop (accessed December 12, 2023).

² Additional background about the incident is available at <https://www.epa.gov/east-palestine-oh-train-derailment/background> (accessed November 13, 2023).

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Accountability Working Paper



Community Health Workers as Rights Defenders: Exploring the Collective Identity of the Mitanins of Chhattisgarh, India

Shriyuta Abhishek and Samir Garg



[Community Health Workers as Rights Defenders: Exploring the Collective Identity of the Mitanins of Chhattisgarh, India: Accountability Working Paper](#) | Shriyuta Abhishek and Samir Garg | ARC Publications

Residency Training workshop



RESIDENCY IN HEALTH-HUMANITIES



(Supported by Dr Koverly Nambisan, Alumnus St John's Medical College, Batch of 1965)

FOR WHOM?

The Health and Humanities Division of St John's is announcing a **4 week Residency** in Health Humanities for **early - mid-career medical/ health practitioners or academic faculty** who are interested in an area of exploration within the disciplines of **Health Humanities, Bioethics, History, or Philosophy**. The focused exploration and learning will lead to a creative piece/ academic paper on the chosen area.

HOW TO APPLY?

Interested applicants may respond with a **statement of purpose**, describing themselves and their area of interest in the humanities, the expected learning and a **proposed date for beginning** the Residency in 2024. This should be **within 1000 words**.

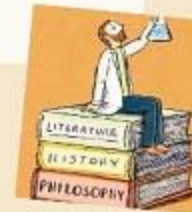
You can send it by email to manjulikavaz@sjri.res.in. Applications from St John's Medical College and Hospital will need to be routed and approved by the respective **HOD and Dean of the Medical College**.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications are to be submitted by **January 29, 2024**. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by a panel either online or in person. The selected Resident will be informed by **February 24th, 2024**. The Residency will commence based on the month selected by the Resident.

FINAL NOTE

The selected Resident will be expected to take leave from their department for this full-time residency. **Rs 40,000** will be awarded to the selected Resident to assist with the outcome in the form of a **paper and an exhibition / installation / creative piece**. Each resident will have a mentor selected by the Humanities Division. **For further details, scan the attached QR code.**



Residency in Health Humanities | St John's Medical College and Hospitals | Application deadline January 29, 2024

Scholarship

[Caroline Miles Visiting Scholarship](#) | ETHOX | Deadline: April 21, 2024

Capacity strengthening in bioethics and its sub-fields: Enquires for short-duration intensive training program

Please write to us on fmesmumbai@gmail.com and admin@fmesinstitute.org with your enquiries for customized short-duration intensive training program in various sub-fields of bioethics. For over two decades, we have been organizing training program in bioethics sub-fields, amongst others, research ethics in social science research in health; public health ethics; clinical ethics, research ethics in public health research; implementation science and ethics, research ethics in mental health interventions; research ethics and digital technology-based health interventions; ethics of program monitoring and evaluations; and research ethics in research involving adolescents and children.

Advertise and help to sustain IJME

IJME welcomes advertisements for the print issue as well as the website. Two advertisement spaces on the website, in banner and box area, are available on the landing page and can be viewed at <https://ijme.in/>.

The guidelines, tariff details, and payment details are available [here](#).

APPEAL FOR DONATION TO THE FORUM FOR MEDICAL ETHICS SOCIETY **APPEAL TO PAY WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD FOR ACCESSING THE IJME and ITS DATABASE**

Indian Journal of Medical Ethics (IJME) is published by the **Forum for Medical Ethics Society (FMES)** since 1993. It is a **multi-disciplinary** journal of bioethics, healthcare ethics and humanities. It is also committed to maintaining editorial independence, from the publisher as well as by avoiding financial dependence that could create conflict of interest. In addition, we are striving to keep the IJME online free and open-access. Therefore, the IJME/FMES need support through donations and grants from individuals and non-profit foundations. ***Donations/grants are solicited only from Indian individuals and entities*** as Indian laws do not permit a journal to receive donations/grants from foreign sources.

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- By paying a fee of any amount for full-text views or PDF download of any article from the IJME website;
- By paying article processing charges of any amount on publication as affordable to the readers/authors.

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