

# **The Family Physician And Ethics At The Bedside**

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**Abstract:** background: Clinical ethics and ethics committees are a real phenomenon in medicine and play an important role in improving patient care by enhancing the decision-making process between patients and their physicians and thus strengthening this special bond. This article reviews the evolving qualifications of the clinical ethics consultant and compares them with the traditional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of the family physician.

**Methods:** Material for this comparison was gathered from a review of the pertinent literature of the past 10 years on the development of clinical ethics and the addition of ethics to the medical curriculum and from personal observations and literature commentary on family practice as a distinct entity.

**Result: Conclusion:** Family physicians are uniquely qualified to serve as ethics consultants, particularly with additional training in moral philosophy and health care law. It is hoped that family physicians will become increasingly involved in this growing field to serve as future teachers, researchers, institutional leaders, and policy makers in clinical ethics. More importantly, faculty role models are needed to train family practice residents in ethical decision making at the bedsides of their patients.