



The Ocean State Ethics Network and Brown Medical School present:

Court-Appointed Guardians: Strangers at the Bedside?

Thursday, April 6, 2006

5:30-7:30 pm

PANELISTS

- Kathleen Heren: Clinical Director, Alliance for Better Long Term Care
- Lynn McNicoll, MD: Geriatrician, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Brown University
- Valerie Pauley, MEd: Director, Volunteer Guardian Program

Moderator: Jay M. Baruch, MD – Director, Ocean State Ethics Network, Brown Medical School

OBJECTIVES

● Develop a greater understanding of the types of medical decisions guardians are called upon to make on behalf of incapacitated patients (wards), and the process by which such decisions are made.	● Analyze the ethical foundations for surrogate decision-making in general, and how decision-making by guardians compares to these standards.	● Examine the relationship between guardians and their wards.	● Discuss alternatives to guardianship for patients lacking decision-making capacity.
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CASE FOR DISCUSSION:

A 76 year old man with impaired judgment didn't have family willing or able to make decisions for him regarding his affairs or medical issues. During a long hospital admission, hospital social workers and a local attorney arranged for a court appointed guardian. The patient was then transferred to a nursing home for further care, where the guardian met him for the first time. About 6 weeks later, the guardian received a phone call from the emergency department at the VA Medical Center. The patient had an implantable cardiac device (a defibrillator) that "keeps going off" and "this is very painful." The physician asked the guardian for permission to turn the device off (and allow the patient to die). The guardian was unsure of the limits of her decision-making authority and the best medical decision to make in this situation. The guardian didn't understand what the cardiac device was, how it worked, and whether other treatment options existed.

LOCATION: Sharpe Refectory, Chancellor's Dining Room
144 Thayer Street (corner of Thayer and George), Providence, RI 02912

- **Contact Donna at 401-863-3969 or Donna_Goodnow@Brown.edu to RSVP or get directions. Light refreshments will be provided.**

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*Social work CEUs have been applied for.
Nursing CEUs have been applied for.*