Whose Choice Is It? 
Ethics and Living at Risk 

NSHEN Annual Conference 
October 22, 2015 

PRE-CONFERENCE PANEL: SOCIAL MEDIA & PROFESSIONALISM 
This panel is a free, public event. No registration required. 
October 21, 2015 | 7-9 pm 

To register, please visit: WWW.NSHEN.CA
Registration

All registrations must be completed on-line and received on or before Friday, October 9, 2015.

Space is limited so please register early. There is a group discount available for 4 or more people registering at once. See online registration information for more details.

Conference Cancellations:
Cancellations received in writing on or before Friday October 9, 2015 will be refunded the full registration fee.

No refunds will be provided after October 9, 2015.

Name substitutions will be accepted at any time.

Confirmation:
If you registered online, your confirmation will be received immediately. Registration received by cheque will be sent a confirmation of their registration via email within two weeks of receipt of the registration form.

Accommodations:

Best Western Burnside
15 Spectacle Lake Drive
Dartmouth, NS
B0T 1K0

Tel: 902-463-2000
Fax: 902-465-2225
Toll Free: 1-800-780-7234

Inquiries:
Please contact Krista Mleczko-Skerry with any questions or comments.
Phone: 902.494-4038
Social media cannot be ignored as its use becomes increasingly prevalent for both individuals and organizations. As in any context where people interact, ethical issues arise regarding behavior on social media platforms. This panel will address questions around conduct that arise when using social media as a professional, especially in the context of health care.

Panelists:

Christine Chambers
Clinical Psychologist and Canada Research Chair in Pain and Child Health, IWK Health Centre; Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University

Tess Laidlaw, BSc, MA, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Communications Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University

Tess Laidlaw is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communications Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. She holds a PhD in Rhetoric and Media Studies from the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. Prior to beginning her academic career, Tess worked in public relations capacities at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and at a vaccine research and development organization based at the University of Saskatchewan. These roles, combined with experience in biochemistry and biology, spurred an interest in the communication of scientific and health-related topics to the public. Tess holds an abiding interest in communication during high-risk health threat situations, including the changing role of expertise in such situations, as the availability of digital media challenges traditional sources of authority.

Michael Sangster
Director, Interprofessional Practice, IWK Health Centre

Amy Thurlow, BPR, MA, APR, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Communications Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University

Amy Thurlow is a Professor in the Department of Communications Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University, where she teaches communications and public relations. Her research interests focus on the areas of identity construction, critical historiography and organizational communication. Her work has looked at the impact of communication on organizational change strategies, the role of power and legitimation in the construction of organizational and individual identities, and the relationship between history and theory in understandings of knowledge production.

Moderator: Marika Warren
Health Care Ethicist, Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network; Assistant Professor, Department of Bioethics, Dalhousie University

This evening session does not require registration and there is no fee to attend.
Conference

Whose Choice Is It? Ethics and Living at Risk

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Individual choices to live “at risk” can test commitments to the principle of respect for choice. They often challenge us to reexamine the values that drive health policy and health care practice. This conference is dedicated to examining these choices and the contexts in which they are made from a range of perspectives within health care. It provides the opportunity for participants to reflect on living at risk and the important ethical questions that it raises about what it is to provide good care and what it is to live a good life.

Conference Objectives:

• Describe what “living at risk” looks like within your practice
• Describe ethical concerns related to living at risk
• Describe challenges raised by living at risk from a range of perspectives
• Discuss why caring for individuals living at risk can be so challenging

Plenary Session:

Caring for Populations Living at Risk: Collaboration, Creativity and Compassion

Patti Melanson
Nurse Team Leader, Mobile Outreach Street Health

Dr. Christy Simpson
Department Head and Associate Professor, Department of Bioethics, Dalhousie University; Coordinator, Ethics Collaborations, Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network

Moderated by: Dr. Jeff Kirby
Professor, Department of Bioethics, Dalhousie University; Ethics Consultant, Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network
Main Conference Schedule

Thursday, October 22, 2015

8:30 – 9:00 am           Continental Breakfast / Conference Registration
9:00 – 9:15 am           Opening
9:15 - 10:30 am           Plenary Session

**Caring for Populations Living at Risk: Collaboration, Creativity and Compassion**

Patti Melanson, Dr. Christy Simpson
Moderated by: Dr. Jeff Kirby

10:30 – 11:00 am      Nutrition Break
11:00 – 12:00 pm      Break-out Sessions

A. **Living at Risk, Working at Risk: Health Care in the Home and Community**
   Donna Sutton, RN, BN, MEd

B. **Not in a Vacuum: System-Level Perspectives on Choices to Live at Risk**
   Christy Simpson, PhD

C. **Perception, Prevention, and Populations: Issues of Risk in a Public Health Context**
   Gaynor Watson-Creed, MD, MoH

D. **The Dignity of Risk and Lives Well Lived**
   Kathryn Hominick, Catherine-Anne Murray

E. **Autonomy, Resilience, and Learning: Risky Choices Among Youth**
   Patricia Murray

12:00 – 1:00 pm      Lunch
1:00 – 2:00 pm      Break-out Sessions: Same as above
2:00 – 2:20 pm      Break
2:20 – 3:20 pm      Break-out Sessions: Same as above
3:20 - 3:45 pm      Wrap up discussion
Breakout Sessions

A. Living at Risk, Working at Risk: Health Care in the Home and Community

Donna Sutton - Health Services Manager, Continuing Care & Transition Planning, Nova Scotia Health Authority Western Zone

Objectives

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to discuss living at risk in settings where they (and others) are less able to control the environment, with attention to the unique ethical obligations that might arise in these contexts. At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe some of the particular risks that health care professionals working in home care and community settings face and why these might be grounds for ethical concerns
- Describe some unique ethical issues related to living at risk when providing health care in the home and the community
- Reflect on the ways in which risk is unevenly distributed amongst health care professionals and the obligations of justice that this might invoke

B. Not in a Vacuum: System-Level Perspectives on Choices to Live at Risk

Christy Simpson - Department Head and Associate Professor, Department of Bioethics, Dalhousie University; Coordinator, Ethics Collaborations, Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network

Objectives

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to discuss living at risk from an organizational or systems-level perspective, reflecting on the interface between individuals and systems in the context of choice. At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the ways in which system level structures can affect individual choices about living at risk and vice versa
- Reflect on the unique means available to organizations and systems to influence choice related to living at risk


Gaynor Watson-Creed - Medical Officer of Health, Nova Scotia Health Authority Central Zone

Objectives

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to discuss risk from a public health perspective, thinking about both risk at a population level as well as how we convey information about risk to help individuals make choices. At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Describe how risk is approached in the context of public health work
- Reflect upon ethical considerations in how policy and programs can affect choices regarding living at risk
D. Dignity, Risk, and Choice in the Care of the Elderly

Kathryn Hominick - Social Worker, Seniors’ Health, Nova Scotia Health Authority Central Zone

Catherine-Anne Murray - Occupational Therapist, Seniors’ Health, Nova Scotia Health Authority Central Zone

Objectives

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to discuss the concept of “dignity of risk” and explore how it plays out in practice, with particular attention to acute care, discharge planning and caring for older adults. At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

• Describe “dignity of risk” and its relevance to ethical decision making

• How to balance dignity of risk with duty of care

• Identify at least two ethical issues encountered when promoting risk as a positive value in caring for individuals

E. Autonomy, Resilience, and Learning: Risky Choices Among Youth

Patricia Murray - Special Advisor, Mental Health and Addictions, to Associate Deputy Minister of Health and Wellness

Objectives

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to discuss the tension between various obligations of those caring for youth living at risk, including fostering development and protecting a wide range of future choices. At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

• Describe the sorts of choices that are especially likely to generate ethical concern regarding risk-taking amongst youth

• Identify at least two strategies for health care providers addressing ethical concerns raised by these choices
Speaker Biographies

**Kathryn Hominick** - Social Worker, Seniors’ Health, Nova Scotia Health Authority Central Zone

**Jeff Kirby** - Jeff Kirby is a professor in the Department of Bioethics of Dalhousie University’s Faculty of Medicine. As a healthcare ethicist with a background in medicine and philosophy, he works with health organizations and government to support their capacities for ethics-informed decision making. His academic and research interests include: the ethics analysis of complex healthcare practices; critical care ethics; social justice and accountability in health policy development; the ethics of ‘assisted dying’; and organ donation and transplantation ethics.

**Patti Melanson** - Nurse Team Leader, Mobile Outreach Street Health

Patti Melanson is a nurse and Team Lead for the Mobile Outreach Street Health Program in Halifax, NS. She has worked in the area of homelessness and health for the past 16 years. Patti has worked to improve the delivery of health care to people who are homeless and street involved.

**Catherine-Anne Murray** - Catherine-Anne Murray graduated with her Occupational Therapy degree from Queen's University in 2008, after completing a Bachelor of Science degree from McGill University in 2006. Catherine-Anne Murray is an Occupational Therapist with Seniors’ Health in Nova Scotia Health Authority’s Central Zone. She has an Occupational Therapy degree from Queen's University and a Bachelor of Science degree from McGill University. Catherine-Anne is passionate about helping older adults stay at home as long as possible, and assessing and problem solving the risks that are often inherent with the care of frail older adults. She has worked on the Geriatric Restorative Care Unit, the Geriatric Assessment Unit/Progressive Care, and currently with the Geriatric Memory Clinic team. She has a particular interest in dementia care and how to improve care for those with dementia, their families, and caregivers.

**Patricia Murray** - Patricia received her BA degree in 1980 and a Master's degree in Applied Clinical Psychology, 1988 and a Master’s degree in Health Services Administration, 2008. She practiced as a child psychologist in, Alberta & Nova Scotia (1988 – 1998). She joined the IWK, holding several leadership roles (1998 – 2005). Patricia Murray is Special Advisor to the Associate Deputy Minister on Mental Health and Addictions Department of Health and Wellness. She holds a BA, Master’s in Applied Clinical Psychology, and a Master’s in Health Services Administration. Patricia practiced as a child psychologist in Alberta and Nova Scotia before holding several leadership roles at the IWK. She joined the Department of Health in 2005, where she was Director of Children’s Services, then Acting Executive Director, Mental Health, Children’s Services & Addiction Treatment Branch. Within her current role in the Department of Health and Wellness, Patricia also implements the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy for Nova Scotia.
Speaker Biographies

Christy Simpson - Christy Simpson is the Department Head of the Department of Bioethics at Dalhousie University. She is the coordinator for the ethics-based collaborations between the Department, Capital Health and the IWK Health Centre, as well as the newly formed Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network. Her primary responsibilities include ethics education and capacity-building, policy development and review, and support for clinical and organizational ethics consultations.

Christy completed her doctorate in philosophy, specializing in bioethics, at the Department of Philosophy at Dalhousie University in 2001. During her doctoral studies, Christy also undertook two clinical practicums at local health care facilities, which stimulated her interest in the role of hope in health care. Her research in this area continued during a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Alberta (2000-2002) and is still strong today.

Donna Sutton - Donna Sutton is the Health Services Manager, Continuing Care & Transition Planning in the Nova Scotia Health Authority’s Western Zone. She has a Bachelor of Nursing and a Master’s of Education, and has had a varied career in health care and education. Donna was previously a Human Resources Development Consultant working with various departments in the NS provincial government. Within her current role, she works with staff at 3 hospital sites and in the community, and liaises with all long-term care facilities in Lunenburg and Queens counties, two home support agencies, VON, and many community organizations and groups.

Gaynor Watson-Creed - Gaynor Watson-Creed is Medical Officer of Health for the Nova Scotia Health Authority, Central Zone, and Adjunct Professor in Dalhousie University’s Departments of Clinical Health and Epidemiology, Family Medicine, and the School of Graduate Studies, and University of Toronto’s Dalla Lana School of Public Health. She is a graduate of Dalhousie Medical School, and holds a BSc and MSc in Biochemistry. Dr. Watson-Creed is currently a member of the Regional Plan review committee (CDAC) for Halifax, the One Nova Scotia Coalition, and several national public and population health advisory councils.
The Nova Scotia Health Ethics Network would like to thank the 2015 Conference Committee for the time and effort they have given to ensure this conference is one that will be of benefit to all who attend.

Support for NSHEN’s activities, including this conference, comes from the following collaborating partners: