Ethical Defaults, Physician Behavior and the Amelioration of Healthcare Disparities

Lenny López, MD, MPH, MDiv
Assistant in Health Policy, Institute for Health Policy
Massachusetts General Hospital
Brigham and Women's Hospital

Co-Presenters

Angelo Volandes, MD
• Ethical Defaults at the End-of-Life

Joel Katz, MD
• Ethical Defaults and Clinical Ethics
Main Focus

Ethical defaults in decision-making as an empiric method to approach challenging problems in health care today

Objectives

Definitions – What is a Disparity?

Current state of Research Findings

Perfect Storm of Challenges

Unintended Physician Contribution to Disparities

The Challenge of Unconscious Bias
Objectives

- What is ethical default theory?
- How can we apply this to the problem of disparities?
- What is the role of health information technology in this process?

The Practice of Medicine

“Life is short, the art long, opportunity fleeting, experience treacherous, judgment is difficult. It is not enough for the physician to do what is necessary... the circumstances must be favorable.”

Hippocrates