

Medical Ethics and Law Symposium

Should Adolescents be Permitted to Consent to Their Own Medical Care?



March 8, 2024 (Friday)



6:00 – 7:30 pm (HKT)



ZOOM & Pao Yue Kong Auditorium,
G/F, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine
Jockey Club Building, 99 Wong Chuk
Hang Road, Aberdeen

The issue of adolescent consent for their own medical care remains a very topical matter that doctors and healthcare professionals may very well confront in their own practice. Granting autonomy to adolescents acknowledges their evolving decision-making capacity and fosters trust between the patient and the healthcare provider. However, concerns arise regarding emotional maturity and cognitive abilities. Striking a balance between respecting autonomy and safeguarding well-being requires thoughtful evaluation and effective communication while also navigating the legal, societal and cultural intricacies of this issue.



Keynote Speaker

Prof Mark Cherry

- *Dr Patricia A. Hayes Professor in Applied Ethics and Professor of Philosophy at St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas*
- *Visiting External Advisor, MEHU*

Host



Prof Julie Chen

*Director, MEHU
School of Clinical Medicine, HKU*

Discussion Moderator



Prof Eric C. Ip

Co-Director, CMEL

Discussants



Prof Gilberto Leung

*Co-Director, CMEL, HKU
President and Co-Chairman,
Professionalism and Ethics
Committee, HKAM*



Dr James Chiu

*Senior Research Fellow,
CMEL, HKU
Co-Chairman, Professionalism
and Ethics Committee, HKAM*



Prof Queenie See

*Clinical Assistant Professor,
Department of Paediatrics and
Adolescent Medicine
School of Clinical Medicine, HKU*



Mr Ivan Lam

*MBBS II student
School of Clinical
Medicine, HKU*

Details & Registration





**HKU
Med** School of Clinical Medicine
Medical Ethics & Humanities Unit
香港大學醫學倫理及人文學部



CMEL
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CENTRE FOR MEDICAL ETHICS AND LAW



HONG KONG ACADEMY OF MEDICINE
香港醫學專科學院

Medical Ethics and Law Symposium
***Should Adolescents be Permitted
to Consent to Their Own Medical Care?***

The issue of adolescent consent for their own medical care remains a very topical matter that doctors and healthcare professionals may very well confront in their own practice. Granting autonomy to adolescents acknowledges their evolving decision-making capacity and fosters trust between the patient and the healthcare provider. However, concerns arise regarding emotional maturity and cognitive abilities. Striking a balance between respecting autonomy and safeguarding well-being requires thoughtful evaluation and effective communication while also navigating the legal, societal and cultural intricacies of this issue. We welcome all clinicians, colleagues and interested parties to join this symposium and to engage with our speakers!

Date: 8 March 2024, Friday

Time: 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm (Hong Kong Time)

Venue: ZOOM & Pao Yue Kong Auditorium, G/F, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Jockey Club Building, 99 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen

The Programme

6:00 pm Welcome and Introduction of Speakers



Prof Julie Chen

Director, Medical Ethics and Humanities Unit (MEHU),
School of Clinical Medicine, The University of Hong Kong

6:05 pm Keynote address

Should Adolescents be Permitted to Consent to Their Own Medical Care? How the West Gets It Wrong



Prof Mark Cherry

Dr Patricia A. Hayes Professor in Applied Ethics and Professor of
Philosophy at St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas
Visiting External Advisor, MEHU

6:45 pm Panel discussion and Q&A



Moderator

Prof Eric C. Ip

Co-Director, Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, HKU
Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

Discussants



Prof Gilberto Leung

Co-Director, Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, HKU
President and Co-Chairman, Professionalism and Ethics
Committee, Hong Kong Academy of Medicine



Dr James Chiu

Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Medical Ethics and Law, HKU
Co-Chairman, Professionalism and Ethics Committee, Hong Kong
Academy of Medicine



Prof Wing Shan Queenie See

Clinical Assistant Professor
Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine
School of Clinical Medicine, The University of Hong Kong



Mr Ivan Lam

MBBS II student
School of Clinical Medicine, The University of Hong Kong

Keynote Address

Should Adolescents be Permitted to Consent to Their Own Medical Care? How the West Gets It Wrong

This presentation offers a view beyond that which would narrowly appreciate the role of parents and other adult family members in medical decision-making to acting as custodian of the best interests of their minor children (i.e., those under 18 years of age). In many Western countries, including Canada and much of Western Europe, there has been an attempt to remove so-called “mature minors” from the authority of their parents and other adult family members. Informed consent for medical decisions may be made by the adolescent himself if the medical team judges the child to be sufficiently mature to make decisions on his own. This presentation explores ways in which adolescents, even so-called “mature minors”, lack adequate development of the intellectual, affective, and emotional capacities necessary morally to consent to significant medical treatment on their own behalf. The weight of the psychological and neurophysiological data regarding brain maturation supports the conclusion that adolescents are qualitatively different types of agents than mature adults. They lack full adult maturity and personal agency. In response to the move to liberate children from parental authority, I argue in support of an account of family authority and family autonomy.

Prof Mark Cherry



Mark J. Cherry is the Dr. Patricia A. Hayes Professor in Applied Ethics and Professor of Philosophy at St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas. He earned his bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from the University of Houston and his doctorate degree in philosophy from Rice University in Houston, Texas. His research compasses ethics and bioethics, together with social and political philosophy.

He is Editor of the *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* (Oxford University Press); Senior Editor of the journal *Christian Bioethics* (Oxford University Press); and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *HealthCare Ethics Committee Forum* (SpringerNature); he is Co-editor of the book series *The Annals of Bioethics* (Routledge) and Editor of the book series *Philosophical Studies in Contemporary Culture* (SpringerNature).

He is author of *Kidney for Sale by Owner: Human Organs, Transplantation, and the Market* (Georgetown University Press, 2005/2015); *Sex, Family, and the Culture Wars* (Routledge, 2016); and *Bioethics After God: Morality, Culture, and Medicine* (University of Notre Dame Press, forthcoming August 2024), as well as numerous edited books, journal articles, book chapters, and other publications.

Discussants

Prof Gilberto Leung



Professor Gilberto K.K. Leung is a neurosurgeon, clinical professor, and holder of the endowed Tsang Wing-Hing Professorship in Clinical Neuroscience at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). He obtained his MD, MS, and PhD from HKU; LLB from the University of London; and LLM (Medical Law and Ethics) with Distinction and the McLagan Prize for Best Graduate from the University of Edinburgh. He is currently Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning) of the LKS Faculty of Medicine and Co-Director of the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law at HKU, and President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine.

Dr James Chiu



Dr Chiu is an Honorary Clinical Assistant Professor at HKU Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care. He is a HKU medical graduate and a Specialist in General Surgery. Dr Chiu also possesses LLB (Hons) degree from University of London. He is a member of International Network for Law and Apology Research. Dr Chiu has published extensively in journals in Hong Kong and abroad as well as book chapters on healthcare law, healthcare ethics, disciplinary proceedings, expert witnesses, apologies, apology legislation, negotiation and mediation. He has chaired or spoken in over 100 local or international meetings / conferences to medical and legal practitioners and students.

Discussants

Prof Wing Shan Queenie See



Prof Queenie See is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Practice in the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, School of Clinical Medicine. She graduated with M.B.B.S. from the University of Hong Kong in 2009, becoming a paediatric specialist in 2017. Prof See went on to pursue further training in Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London in 2020 and obtained her subspecialty fellowship in Paediatric Endocrinology in 2022. She is currently the council member of the Hong Kong Obesity Society and the Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Endocrinology and Metabolism, and the honorary medical advisor of the Youth Diabetic Action.

Mr Ivan Lam



Ivan is a second-year medical student interested in the intersection of medical ethics and health policy. He is the Founding Editor-in-Chief of *Ethos*, a platform for stories and ideas in medical humanities and ethics. His inquisitive nature compels him to explore our morals at every corner.

Discussion Moderator

Prof Eric C. Ip



Prof Eric C. Ip is a public health bioethicist and Co-Director of the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), where he is Professor of Law. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Socio-Legal Studies from the Faculty of Law, University of Oxford, and a Master of Bioethics from the Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney, among other academic degrees. He has been awarded the Outstanding Young Researcher Award, University Research Output Prize, and Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award by HKU, and the Research Excellence Award and Young Researcher Award by The Chinese University of Hong Kong, where he served as Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Director of the LLB Programme.

Host

Prof Julie Chen



Prof Julie Chen is Associate Professor of Teaching with a joint appointment in the Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care and the Bau Institute of Medical and Health Sciences Education. She serves as Assistant Dean (Student Wellness & Engagement), LKS Faculty of Medicine, Director of the Medical Ethics and Humanities Unit in the School of Clinical Medicine and is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law of The University of Hong Kong. Prof Chen is a family physician who completed her residency training at the University of Toronto. Her teaching and research focus on the development of medical student professionalism and humanism in undergraduate medical education as well as the exploration of issues affecting doctor and medical student wellbeing. In recognition of her work, she has been awarded a Faculty Teaching Medal and three University Outstanding Teaching Awards from The University of Hong Kong.

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