

Ethics in pediatric neurology

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Pediatric neurology

presents unique ethical challenges due to the vulnerability of child patients, the complexity of neurological conditions, and the involvement of families in decision-making.

The following are key ethical principles that must be respected in this field.



Acting in the Best Interest of the Child

- All decisions should prioritize the well-being of the child, even when this may conflict with the wishes of parents or guardians.
- Physicians must carefully balance family preferences with evidence-based medical recommendations.



➤ ***Informed Consent and Assent***

- Parents or legal guardians must provide informed consent for diagnostic and therapeutic interventions.
- Clear, understandable information should be provided regarding the diagnosis, prognosis, treatment options, risks, and long-term outcomes.
- For older children and adolescents, obtaining assent , the child's voluntary agreement to care , is also ethically important.



➤ ***Confidentiality and Privacy***

- Medical information must be kept confidential, including from certain family members if appropriate.
- Respecting privacy is especially critical in adolescents, for issues such as seizures, behavioral disorders, or substance use.



➤ ***Compassionate and Respectful Communication with Families***

- Families often experience anxiety and distress; physicians should communicate with patience, empathy, and without judgment.
- In serious or degenerative conditions, honesty and clarity should be balanced with sensitivity.



➤ ***Avoiding Overtreatment or Harmful Interventions***

- In cases of terminal or progressive illnesses, unnecessary or aggressive treatments that only prolong suffering should be avoided.
- Consulting hospital ethics committees is encouraged in complex or controversial cases.



➤ ***Justice and Equity in Access to Care***

- Healthcare should be provided without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.
- Special attention should be given to underserved or vulnerable populations.



Thank YOU