

Ethical and healthcare directives of the Catholic church in India:A consultation with stakeholders

Date: Dec 3,2018, 9 am to 4 pm

Organisers: Catholic Bioethics Forum (CBF) of the Archdiocese of Bangalore in collaboration with the Office of Health Care, Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI).

Presenters: Chris Vimalraj (Convener, CBF), Olinda Timms, Mario Vaz (Health and Humanities, St. John’s Research Institute, Bangalore), Mathew Perumpil (Secretary, Office of Health Care, CBCI), GD Ravindran, Sunita Kurpad (Department of Medical Ethics, St. John’s Medical College), Mercy Abraham (Nursing Services, St. Martha’s Hospital, Bangalore), Martha (Nursing Services, St. Philomena’s Hospital, Bangalore), Anil D’Souza (Independent Lawyer)

Names of Discussants (Bioethics Forum; Archdiocese of Bangalore):

Name	Work Telephone, Email
Rev. Dr. Chris Vimalraj	9591278976; Email: chrisvimalraj@gmail.com
Dr Olinda Timms	9844217117; Email: olinda.t@sjri.res.in
Rev. Fr Mathew Perumpil	919448058060, Email: mperumpil@yahoo.com
Prof GD Ravindran	9880081770; Email: gdravindran@gmail.com
Prof Sunita Kurpad	91-80-22065460; email: simonsunita@gmail.com
Sr Mercy Abraham	8970239830; Email: mercyrags@gmail.com
Mr Anil D’Souza	9980264420; Email: anil.albert@gmail.com
Mario Vaz	91-80-49467203; Email: mariovaz@sjri.res.in

Target audience

Catholic healthcare professionals representing different parts of the country as well as across disciplines will be invited.

Overview

Title: Ethical and healthcare directives of the Catholic church in India:A consultation with stakeholders

Objectives

- To engage with multiple stakeholders to refine the draft document entitled “Catholic Ethical and Healthcare Directives for India”
- To plan for the training and dissemination of the directives once the document has been finalised and approved

Background

The Catholic Church in India is extensively involved in healthcare through a network (Catholic Health Association of India – CHAI). CHAI which has completed 75 years of existence is India’s largest non government healthcare network with 3537 member institutions, providing 50000 beds and caring for 21 million people every year.

It is imperative that this faith-based healthcare network remains true to its calling; this includes ethical healthcare. The directives that are being developed will be applicable to all Healthcare Ministries of the Catholic Church and Catholic personnel in India. Towards this, inspired by the United States Catholic Bishops Ethical and Healthcare Directives (1) and the New Charter for Health Care Workers of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers (2), The Office of Health Care of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) approached the Bioethics Forum of the Archdiocese of Bangalore to draft India specific Directives.

The Directives that have been drafted have several characteristics:

1. They are embedded in the reality of the current healthcare situation in India
2. They are true to the scriptural and textual references that characterise Catholic Bioethics and its derived ethical principles, including the Catechism of the Catholic Church (3).
3. Each directive has been linked to an actualisation process, so that the document becomes a source for practical implementation.

The aim of the Consultation is to engage with multiple stakeholders to rigorously review the draft directives and its actualisation process, since the directives are targeted towards all institutions of the Catholic healthcare network, regardless of size, location, or specialisations.

Session format

A draft document—“Catholic Ethical and Healthcare Directives for India”—has been prepared. This document has 6 parts:

1. The social responsibility of Catholic Health Services
2. Pastoral healthcare
3. The doctor-patient relationship
4. Issues in care for the beginning of life
5. Issues in care for the seriously ill and dying
6. Forming new partnerships with healthcare organisations and providers

The session will be divided in two parts each of which will be for approximately 2 ½ to 3 hours.

Part 1- the morning session:

Participants will be divided into 6 groups, based on interest and expertise, representing the six parts of the directives. Each group will go through the directives they have been assigned and deliberate on the following major issues:

- The relevance of the directives to India
- The underlying ethical principles contained within the directives
- The concordance / discordance of secular and Catholic ethics in relation to the specific directives, if any

- The scriptural/textual basis of the directives
- The actualisation or practical implementation of the directives

Part 2 –the afternoon session:

The deliberations of each part of the directives discussed in the morning session will be presented to the entire group for discussion. The aim of this session will be to:

- Arrive at a near-final draft of the directives
- Prepare a comprehensive list of practical issues related to implementation
- Prepare a plan for training on the directives across regions and type of healthcare personnel
- Outline a plan for dissemination, once the draft of the directives have been approved

References

Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services. Sixth Edition. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
 New Charter for Health Care Workers. Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers (2016). The Vatican. Translated by The National Catholic Bioethics Center, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Catechism of the Catholic Church. [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/ INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/INDEX.HTM)
 accessed 15th October, 2018

Implications/conclusions

This workshop is one of several planned prior to the approval and adoption of the directives for India. The directives which will apply to all Catholic healthcare institutions once approved will be important to ensuring that the CHAI network maintains a socially relevant and ethical presence in healthcare in India. These directives address the long standing need of Catholic institutions, particularly those which are smaller and peripherally placed, seeking to align their work with their faith.

Keywords: Catholic, Bioethics, healthcare, India

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Logistical requirements

Audience size – 40-50

Room set up - group tables

Specific equipment requirements - audio-visual equipment for presentations

Preferred date of pre-Congress: Dec 3, 2018

Duration –full day

Brief Biographies of Presenters

Fr Christopher Vimalraj Hiruthya: B.Sc, B.Th, M.Th (Bioethics), M.Phil (Bioethics), Ph.D (Bioethics): Coordinator, Bioethics Forum, Archdiocese of Bangalore; Adjunct Faculty, Health and Humanities, St Johns; Commission for Health, Archdiocese of Bangalore; Professor of Bioethics, Dharmaram and St. Peter's Canon Law Centre.

Dr Olinda Timms: Anaesthesiologist, undergraduate and postgraduate training at Christian Medical College, Vellore; PG Diploma, Medical Law and Ethics, NSLIU; PG Diploma Bioethics NIH-ICMR. Adjunct Faculty – health and Humanities, St. John's Research Institute; Author: Biomedical Ethics (Elsevier 2016)

Rev Fr Mathew Perumpil: MI, Secretary, CBCI Office of Health Care, St. Johns, Bangalore. Member of the Order of the Ministers of the Infirm (Camillians) Certified Supervisor in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and trainer in Pastoral Care to the Sick. Leader of the Camillians in India for 6 years; Director and Coordinator of the HIV Care initiatives - Snehadan, Consultant to State and National HIV Care program of NACO. CHAI National Board member for 6 years and Karnataka State Regional Health Secretary for the Bishop's Conference for 3 years.

Prof GD Ravindran: Professor of Medicine and Medical Ethics, St. John's Medical College. Trained in Bioethics. MHSC University of Toronto. Member of the ICMR guidelines committee, CBCI Commission for health care policy.

Prof Sunita Kurpad: After MBBS at St. John's, completed MRC Psychiatry from Cambridge University, UK. On return to St. John's, after completion of DNB Psychiatry has been faculty at St. John's for more than twenty years, with an interest in clinical work, teaching, research and several publications in ethics and in psychiatry.

Sr Mercy Abraham: R G S St. Martha's Hospital, Bangalore. BSc Nursing and MA in Sociology; former Principal, School of Nursing and Nursing Superintendent. Superior and President of St Martha's Hospital Society. President of National CHAI for 3 years, its Board Member for 3 years and Karnataka for another 3 years. Special interest: Community Health, Pastoral Health Care and Bioethics.

Sr Martha

Mr Anil D'Souza: B Com, LLB, LLM; Independent Lawyer; Associated with the Archdiocese of Bangalore and (in some cases) at the Karnataka Level with the following - Bioethics Forum, Christian Think Tank, Commission for Ecumenism, Inter-religious dialogue and Small Christian Communities.

Dr Mario Vaz: Professor of Physiology, St. John's and Head, Health and Humanities, St John's Research Institute, Bangalore. About 200 publications in epidemiology of chronic non-communicable diseases and infectious disease, physiology, medical education, humanities and health, and ethics.