Contemporary Ethical Dilemmas in Pediatric Ophthalmology: Guidance for Clinicians, Scientists, and Trainees

Friday March 20, 2026, 10:30 – 11:45 AM
AAPOS Annual Meeting
Boston, MA

Presenters: Cynthia Beauchamp, MA, MD; Yasmin Bradfield, MD; Megan Collins, MD, MPH; Alejandra de Alba Campomanes, MD, MPH; Jefferson Doyle, MD, PhD, MHS; Kamiar Mireskandari, MD, PhD; Elias Traboulsi, MD, MEd

Format: Case-based panel discussion with interactive audience Q&A

Topics:

- Disclosure and consent for trainee involvement in surgery
- Trainee participation in global ophthalmology outreach
- Ethical considerations in the management of retinopathy of prematurity
- Resource allocation and cost considerations for myopia treatments
- Ethics of genetic testing in pediatric eye disorders
- Artificial intelligence in the pediatric ophthalmology encounter

General resources about clinical ethics and pediatric ethics:

- The "4-Topic" Method to Approaching and Analyzing Ethics Cases (Appendix 1)
    - Adapted from Jonsen AR, Siegler M, Winslade WJ. *Clinical Ethics: A Practical Approach to Ethical Decisions in Clinical Medicine*. 9th ed. McGraw Hill; 2022.
- Code of Ethics. American Academy of Ophthalmology. January 1, 2025. https://www.aao.org/education/ethics-detail/code-of-ethics
- Ross LF. The Philosophical Underpinning of the Family for Pediatric Decision-Making. *Pediatr Clin North Am*. 2024;71(1):27-37. doi:10.1016/j.pcl.2023.08.007
- Truog RD, Brown SD, Browning D, et al. Microethics: The Ethics of Everyday Clinical Practice. *Hastings Center Report*. 2015;45(1):11-17. doi:10.1002/hast.413

Relevant resources / articles by topic:

<u>Disclosure and consent for trainee involvement in surgery</u>

1. Corwin AM, Rajkumar JN, Markovitz BJ, et al. Association of Preoperative Disclosure of Resident Roles With Informed Consent for Cataract Surgery in a

Teaching Program. *JAMA Ophthalmol*. 2019;137(9):1045-1051. doi:10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2019.1919
2. Kirsch MJ, Kasten SJ. What about Learners' Roles in the Operating Room Should Be Disclosed to Patients? *AMA Journal of Ethics*. 2018;20(4):336-341. doi:10.1001/journalofethics.2018.20.4.ecas2-1804
3. Wisner D, Quillen D, Benderson D, Green M. Patient Attitudes Toward Resident Involvement in Cataract Surgery. *Arch Ophthalmol*. 2008;126(9):1235-1239. doi:10.1001/archopht.126.9.1235
4. Bhanot K, Chang J, Grant S, Fecteau A, Camp M. Training surgeons and the informed consent discussion in paediatric patients: a qualitative study examining trainee participation disclosure. *BMJ Open Qual*. 2019;8(3):e000559. doi:10.1136/bmjoq-2018-000559
5. McAlister C. Breaking the Silence of the Switch — Increasing Transparency about Trainee Participation in Surgery. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2015;372(26):2477-2479. doi:10.1056/NEJMp1502901

Trainee participation in global ophthalmology outreach

1. AAO Ethics Committee. Ethical Issues in Global Ophthalmology. 2024. https://www.aao.org/education/ethics-detail/advisory-opinion-ethical-issues-in-global-ophthalm
2. Ehrlich JR, Shantha JG, Mathenge C, et al. Research Partnerships and Guidance in Academic Global Ophthalmology. *International Ophthalmology Clinics*. 2023;63(1):15. doi:10.1097/IIO.0000000000000447
3. Grant CL, Robinson T, Al Hinai A, Mack C, Guilfoyle R, Saleh A. Ethical considerations in global surgery: a scoping review. *BMJ Glob Health*. 2020;5(4):e002319. doi:10.1136/bmjgh-2020-002319
4. Yang G, Bekele A, Krishnaswami S, et al. Cultural competency and ethical behavior for collaboration in limited-resource settings: Guidelines from the Society of University Surgeons Academic Global Surgery Committee and the Association for Academic Global Surgery. *Surgery*. 2024;176(1):108-114. doi:10.1016/j.surg.2024.02.027

Ethical considerations in the management of retinopathy of prematurity

1. Mireskandari K, Collins ME, Tehrani N. Intravitreal bevacizumab for retinopathy of prematurity: Considerations for informed consent. *Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology*. 2015;50(6):409-412. doi:10.1016/j.jcjo.2015.10.004
2. Lai TT, Chen YC, Chi SC, et al. Management of Retinopathy of Prematurity in the Anti-VEGF Era: Consensus and Recommendations From the Taiwan Pediatric Retina (TPR) Group. *American Journal of Ophthalmology*. 2026;281:502-515. doi:10.1016/j.ajo.2025.09.050

Resource allocation and cost considerations for myopia treatments

1. Antonio-Aguirre B, Ambrosino CM, Dai X, Collins ME. Addressing Health Disparities in Pediatric Eye Care for School-Age Children: A Call to Action. *Transl Vis Sci Technol*. 2023;12(11):11. doi:10.1167/tvst.12.11.17
2. Jones L, Drobe B, González-Méijome JM, et al. IMI – Industry Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Myopia Control Report. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*. 2019;60(3):M161-M183. doi:10.1167/iovs.18-25963
3. World Society of Paediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus. *WSPOS Myopia Consensus Statement 2025*. 2025. Accessed February 20, 2026. https://wspos.org/myopia-consensus-statement-2025/
4. *Myopia: Causes, Prevention, and Treatment of an Increasingly Common Disease*. National Academies Press; 2024. doi:10.17226/27734
5. Hunter DG. Opinion | This drug treats myopia. I'm sick of telling patients they can't have it. *The Washington Post*. February 10, 2026. Accessed February 18, 2026. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2026/02/10/fda-myopia-drug-trial/

Ethics of genetic testing in pediatric eye disorders

1. Lee K, Abul-Husn NS, Amendola LM, et al. ACMG SF v3.3 list for reporting of secondary findings in clinical exome and genome sequencing: A policy statement of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG). *Genetics in Medicine*. 2025;27(8). doi:10.1016/j.gim.2025.101454
2. Secondary and Incidental Findings in Genetic Testing. NSGC. Accessed February 9, 2026. https://www.nsgc.org/Advocacy/Position-Statements/Position-Statements/Post/secondary-and-incidental-findings-in-genetic-testing-1?utm_source=chatgpt.com
3. Souzeau E, Burdon KP, Mackey DA, et al. Ethical Considerations for the Return of Incidental Findings in Ophthalmic Genomic Research. *Transl Vis Sci Technol*. 2016;5(1):3. doi:10.1167/tvst.5.1.3

Artificial intelligence in the pediatric ophthalmology encounter

1. Evans NG, Wenner DM, Cohen IG, et al. Emerging Ethical Considerations for the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Ophthalmology. *Ophthalmol Sci*. 2022;2(2):100141. doi:10.1016/j.xops.2022.100141
2. Mello MM, Char D, Xu SH. Ethical Obligations to Inform Patients About Use of AI Tools. *JAMA*. 2025;334(9):767-770. doi:10.1001/jama.2025.11417
3. American Medical Association. *Augmented Intelligence Development, Deployment, and Use in Health Care*. Published November 12, 2024. Accessed

February 20, 2026. https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/ama-ai-principles.pdf
4. Sifton S. Paging Dr. Chatbot. *The New York Times*. February 11, 2026. https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/11/briefing/paging-dr-chatbot.html

Appendix 1. The "4-Topic" Method to Approaching and Analyzing Ethics Cases.

The "4-Topic" Method to Approaching and Analyzing Ethics Cases

What personal and professional values or experiences might be affecting your approach to this case?

Medical Indications

(Principles: Promote welfare, avoid harm)

Consider……

1. What is the patient's medical problem? history? diagnosis? prognosis?

2. Is the problem acute? chronic? critical? emergent? reversible?

3. What are the goals of treatment?

4. What are the probabilities of success?

5. What are the plans in case of therapeutic failure?

6. In sum, how can this patient be benefited by medical and nursing care, and how can harm be avoided?

Patient Preferences

(Principle: Respect for autonomy)

Consider……

1. Does the patient have decision making capacity? If so, identify preferences.

2. If without capacity, who is the appropriate surrogate? Is the surrogate using appropriate standards for decision making?

3. Has the patient/surrogate been informed of benefits and risks, indicated understanding and given consent?

4. Has the patient made advance care plans or named a health care agent other than parent?

5. In sum, is the patient's right to choose being respected to the extent possible in ethics and law?

Quality of Life*

(Principles: Beneficence, Non-maleficence, Respect for Autonomy)

Consider……

1. What are the prospects, with or without treatment, for a return to normal life?

2. What physical, mental, and social deficits is the patient likely to experience if treatment succeeds?

3. Is the patient's present or future condition such that his or her continued life might be judged undesirable?

4. Is there any plan and rationale to forgo treatment?

5. Are there plans for comfort and palliative care?

*Remember that Quality of Life is from the patient's perspective

Contextual Features

(Principle: Justice; Values: Loyalty & Fairness)

Consider……

1. Are there issues that might influence treatment decisions?
- Family - Cultural/Religious
- Provider - Financial

2. Are there limits on confidentiality?

3. Are there problems of resource allocation?

4. How does the law affect treatment decisions?

5. Is clinical research or teaching involved?

6. Is there any conflict of interest on the part of the providers or the institution?

Adapted from: Jonsen AR, Siegler M, Winslade WJ. *Clinical Ethics: A Practical Approach to Ethical Decisions in Medicine.*