

The Bioethics course in Medical schools: The UniCamillus experience

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Introduction

The role of the doctor as a human reference point has declined due to technological innovation, the division of competencies in different specialities and the development of the digital revolution in communication.

Objectives

From the first year, students develop the mind-set of a strongly patient-centred vision and human interaction. The necessary empathetic relationship through narrative medicine, complexity of healthcare organisation and the evolution towards the era of chronicity and palliative care are underlined. This together with the respect of different cultural approaches to medicine. Doctor-patient communication is ethically adapted to the new digital era. The study of genomics, its inherent ethical problems, and the revolution linked to the introduction of artificial intelligence in medicine, are discussed. Subjects such as multidisciplinary and international co-operation are strongly emphasised.

Methods

The course consisted of 120 students, 17 groups, preparing presentations on taught subjects and engaging with invited experts. A book, 'Health and Ethics' which was published recently included all student papers. Students were evaluated on the quality of the materials they produced and on their presentation.

Results

Students in fact were engaged in a “quality competition” thus producing high standard didactic material. The results of these teaching methods were coherent in several crucial aspects of the medical profession: team-working, research, didactic material preparation, presentation and discussion of the work, writing a paper. At the end, in the evaluation of courses at the University, students selected “Moral Philosophy” as first place in their ranking for satisfaction.

Conclusions

Our Universities, normally, do not consider the patient-doctor relationship. The risk is to lose the ability to build an empathetic approach under the influence of technology and over-specialisation. In our opinion, it is important, through the “Moral Philosophy” course to give future doctors, a human vision of medicine.

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