The information contained in Ethics Center publications is current as of the date of publication. However, health care ethics is a dynamic field in which best practices and thinking are constantly evolving. Therefore, some information in our publications may become outdated or may be superseded. We note these instances when they occur, and we encourage users to consult additional authorities on these topics.

EthicsRx

an electronic bulletin from VHA's

National Center for Ethics in Health Care

Friday, January 31, 2003

New Informed Consent Policy

1) VHA Handbook 1004.1, "Informed Consent for Treatments and Procedures," has been revised. The new version is now available from the National Center for Ethics in Health Care at: www.va.gov/vhaethics/download/ICpolicy.doc

2) The new policy was developed with the help of many individuals and offices throughout VHA. The policy development process involved:

   - ❖ researching relevant statutory requirements and case law
   - ❖ conducting an extensive review of the published literature
   - ❖ convening a working group of representatives from VACO and the field
   - ❖ examining existing facility and VISN policies to identify best practices
   - ❖ reviewing the Center's records for related consultation requests
   - ❖ issuing a call for written comments from the field
   - ❖ analyzing nearly 1,000 comments on multiple drafts
   - ❖ discussing aspects of the policy on scheduled national teleconferences
   - ❖ obtaining formal concurrence from multiple VACO offices.

3) The National Center for Ethics in Health Care will be sponsoring several educational events relating to the new policy, including a national ethics teleconference from 1:00-2:00pm EST on February 10 (see http://vaww.va.gov/vhaethics/networking_6.cfm) and a live national satellite broadcast on February 27.
4) If you have questions or comments about this policy change, please contact the National Center for Ethics via MS Outlook at VHA Ethics (vhaethics@hq.med.va.gov).

Ellen Fox, M.D.
Director, National Center for Ethics in Health Care (10AE)