

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

6:02 PM

Daily Newspaper published by GPPC Doha, Qatar.

## WCM-Q seminar explores ethical and legal dilemmas in medicine

November 15 2016 12:26 AM



Some of the experts who participated in the seminar on legal and ethical dilemmas in medicine.

The significant advances in modern medicine in the past decade in areas such as organ transplantation and stem cell research present health professionals with great new opportunities in healing, but also present new ethical dilemmas which require a robust legal framework to protect patients, practitioners and communities, a recent seminar was told.

The observation was made by Dr Sunanda Holmes, associate university counsel and assistant professor of health policy and research at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q). She was addressing a two-day seminar, to explore ethical and legal issues arising in the practice of medicine and biomedical research. The event, which looked at the law and ethics of medicine from a Middle Eastern perspective, was attended by more than 250 health and legal professionals from the Mena region and the US, including

nurses, pharmacists, physicians, lawyers and government employees.

There were presentations on key issues in modern medicine, such as the ethics involved in obtaining informed consent from patients and research subjects, the moral dimensions of organ donation and transplantation, the ethics and laws relating to stem cell research, confidentiality, and Islamic perspectives of medical ethics.

The seminar was in collaboration between WCM-Q and the Salim El-Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism Programme of the American University of Beirut Faculty of Medicine.

Visiting speaker Dr Jeremy Sugarman, the Harvey M Meyerhoff professor of Bioethics and Medicine at the Berman Institute of Bioethics and School of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, US, spoke about the ethical challenges of obtaining informed consent.

"We have rules and procedures around consent, but these alone are not sufficient because in order for them to work they must be guided by the ethical principles of autonomous authorisation and respect for persons."

Dr Mohamed Ghaly, professor of Islam and Biomedical Ethics at Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies, gave a presentation about the ethics of the physician from an Islamic perspective, based on studies of religious texts and early modern and pre-modern medical texts of the Islamic and Greek traditions.

"The concept of consent revolves around the understanding of the human body in general from an Islamic legal perspective. According to this, the owner of the human body is God and humans are trustees of their bodies. Therefore, in my capacity as the trustee of my body, nobody can intervene and interfere in my body without my consent."