

Brief report: The Third Annual Medical Ethics Congress in Iran

Pooneh Salari¹, Farzaneh Zahedi², Kiarash Aramesh³ and Bagher Larijani⁴

¹Assistant Professor, Medical Ethics and History of Medicine Research Center, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran;

²MD, Endocrinology and Metabolism Research Center, Endocrinology and Metabolism Clinical Sciences Institute, Endocrinology and Metabolism Research Institute, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran;

³Associate Professor, Medical Ethics and History of Medicine Research Center, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran;

⁴Professor, Medical Ethics and History of Medicine Research Center & Endocrinology and Metabolism Research Institute, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.

Corresponding Author:

Bagher Larijani

E.mail: emrc@tums.ac.ir

Published: 02 May 2013

J Med Ethics Hist Med, 2013, 6:6

<http://journals.tums.ac.ir/abs/23609>

© 2013 Pooneh Salari et al.; licensee Tehran Univ. Med. Sci.

The *Third National Congress on Medical Ethics* was held on February 21-23, 2013 in Tehran, Iran by *Medical Ethics and History of Medicine Research Center (MEHRC)* in cooperation of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

This occasion provided an opportunity for medical ethics experts as well as lawyers, philosophers, and jurisprudences to discuss related issues in different fields of medical ethics. The congress attended by more than 100 participants provided an oral presentation and also more than 120 participants who presented their work as posters. The congress covered a wide range of subjects.

It is worth mentioning that the *secretary* of the annual medical ethics congress of Iran was developed in the Medical Ethics and History of Medicine Research Center of Tehran University of Medical Sciences in 2010. This secretary was created by cooperation of Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education in order to organize the annual congresses of medical ethics in different medical universities all over the country.

Following the first annual congress in *Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS)* (Sep 19-21, 2010) and the second congress in *Isfahan University of Medical Sciences* (Feb 22-24, 2012), recent congress was held in TUMS. In accordance with the approved schedule, the first two days was dedicated to the subject of “**Medical Ethics and Reproductive Health**” and the third day was on “**Ethics in Teaching**”.

At the first day, the opening ceremony was included the official welcome by the scientific secretary Dr Kiarash Aramesh, and then Professor Bagher Larijani, the congress chairman and the head of MEHRC, opened the 3rd congress by his lecture on “*Ethics in Reproductive Health*”. The next key speaker of the congress was Dr Jihan Tawilah, the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), who delivered the message of this important organization on behalf of Dr Alwan. In addition to mentioning the name of famous Iranian scholars including Avicenna and Razi as the Iranian pioneers in health care services, she appreciated the Iranians efforts in addressing ethical issues in health care. Furthermore she insisted on the role of national ethics committees in providing a proper support in the dialogue between medical, jurisprudence, law, and social sciences in health care services.

Then, Dr Ninuk Widyantoro from Indonesia presented ethical issues in family planning and Dr Sarah Jane Hawkes from England gave a presentation on the ethical issues of screening HIV and provided facts about opt in and opt out methods of getting informed consent. The expert panels during two days presented and discussed the most important and critical ethical challenges of the assisted reproductive technologies, surrogacy, embryo donation, abortion, etc. Patients' autonomy, justice and beneficence in various legal, cultural and religious contexts were discussed too.

In the third day, the congress on "*Ethics in Teaching*" was launched. After opening ceremony and the welcome speech by Dr Pooneh Salari the scientific secretary, the congress chairman Professor Bagher Larijani gave a lecture on the issues by overview of ethics in teaching including ethics education in Iran and the recent advances in the Tehran University of Medical Sciences including establishing PhD degree in medical ethics as well as reforms in teaching medical ethics.

In this day, several international guests from all over the world attended the congress. Dr Ninuk Widyantoro from Indonesia gave a speech on teaching ethics in formal education and the ethical issues surrounding teaching in HPV vaccination was reviewed by Dr Sarah Jane Hawkes from England. Dr Kate Moriarty from UNESCO (Paris) described the mission statement of UNESCO about ethics, human rights, and education while other lecturers presented the ethical issues in other different areas of education including medical and clinical education, designing medical examinations, communication skills, internalization of ethical standards and their implications, the role of ethical intelligence in teaching, ethics in virtual teaching, role models, and compiling ethical guidelines for teaching.

In all sessions and during coffee breaks, discussions were continued and created a chance for attendees to network. The congress identified different aspects of ethical challenges regarding the differences in cultural and religious principles and highlighted new areas for cooperation in future.