

## Translational Ethics in Action

### *Managing your dual role as a practitioner and investigator*

**Course Description:** Translational research involves bringing insights from basic and clinical research to fruition as new interventions, therapies, policies or practices. The research pathway often involves teams of researchers, including clinicians, basic scientists, data scientists, policy experts and clinical trial coordinators who work at the boundary of research and clinical care. Often, the principal investigators in these teams work in multiple roles: as both clinician, researcher, and (potentially) policy advocate. Navigating these competing roles involves balancing the different end goals which may generate conflicts between numerous duties. For instance, clinicians may attempt to enroll their own patients in a clinical research trial. Likewise, researchers working to evaluate public health interventions, may also act as policy advocates for legal or policy changes. **Translational researchers must therefore think carefully about how to balance their responsibility to care for patients and community members with their responsibilities as researchers.**

In this course we are interested in collectively building our skill at resolving ***conflicts between the research enterprise and the ethical practice of medicine or policy advocacy***. Topics covered include:

- Can we separate our role as a researcher from our role as a clinician or public health practitioner?
- When is a study “research” vs “quality improvement”? Does it make a difference ethically?
- When should we use a placebo arm? When is standard of care as a control acceptable?
- Should we enroll our own patients in our research studies?
- When should we return results to participants? How should we handle “incidental findings”?
- When is unconsented secondary research justifiable? What ethical norms should we establish for such research?
- When is there enough evidence to make policy recommendations? Is policy advocacy an ethical duty for researchers?

#### **Who we want.**

We are seeking early career researchers (PhD students, postdocs, junior faculty) who might be interested in participating in a pilot of a course on the ethical dimensions of translational research. Specifically, we are inviting you to participate in 8 facilitated discussions on the ethics and challenges of translational research. This project involves:

- Participation in 8, two hour facilitated discussions on the ethics of translational research.
- Completion of two surveys, one at the beginning and one at the end of the course
- Participation in a 90-minute focus group.

Full completion **will involve an incentive of \$1,000**, with pro-rated incentives for early withdrawal. For NIH post-doctoral and early career awardees (K-series awards), this course may count towards your responsible conduct of research training requirement.

#### **Contact**

To express interest, or to ask any questions, please contact

Jonathan Herington

Assistant Professor of Health Humanities and Bioethics

[jonathan.herington@rochester.edu](mailto:jonathan.herington@rochester.edu)