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| **22nd Punjab Bioethics Group Meeting**  Shalamar Medical & Dental College, Lahore  Friday, September 06, 2024 |

# **Call to order**

The 22nd meeting of the **Punjab Bioethics Group** was held virtually on Friday, September 6, 2024, and was moderated by Dr. Sarosh Saleem. The meeting lasted two hour. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by the members. The meeting involved discussions of one case and was attended by professionals from various institutes in Pakistan. Participants engaged actively in the discussions.

**ATTENDEES INCLUDED:**

Dr. Zahid Bashir, Dr. Sarosh Saleem, Dr. Hana Arbab, Dr. Mumtaz Lakhani, Dr. Sadia Shehzad , Dr. Muhammad Yousuf, Doris Robin, Rachna, Dr. Sana, Dr. Raja Sajjad Asghar, Dr. Jamshed Akhtar, Faiza Ahmed, Unaisa Qzai, Asfiya Aziz, Nauman Qamar, Dr. Asma Akhtar, Yasir, Dr. Farkhanda Ghafoor, Dr. Nazish Imran, Dr. Hafeeza Naz, Razia, Dr. Aamenah Malik, Ali

# **Agenda**

Dr. Hana Arbab from Indus Hospital, Karachi, will discuss "Navigating Ethical decision making for infant."

# **New business**

**Case:** Dr. Hana Arbab, a pediatrician from Indus Hospital, Karachi, presented a case for discussion about 1.7 months old baby boy who was suffering with the severe hypoglycemia since birth, admitted in high dependency unit, has issues with IV access. All peripheral lines had been exhausted and a last line on the scalp has been taken. Since diagnosis had not yet been made, hyperglycemic diet was not initiated and simple milk didn’t suffice. Repeated percutaneous catheterization attempts had failed. We were asked to do a cut down to take a central line. Father gave us the consent to proceed and the mother refused for the procedure because there were history of miscarriages and post-natal deaths of at least 3 babies.

**Discussion & Suggestions:**

It’s like a true complex ethical dilemma and difficult to evaluate (Dr. Sarosh). There is a question does mother understands the consequences? Mother’s perceptions, experiences, mother-baby bonding; observing and handling many things; seeing her child constantly, parents are the persons who care and know the most about their child.

If the parents & pediatric healthcare professionals agreed than we can proceed case (Dr Zahid Bashir).

Healthcare providers are part of that; they should see the decision making capacity of the both father and mother. We usually talk about the capacity when things go wrong or parents get disagree.

Mother is taking decision after looking consequences. Parent’s disagreement was because of undiagnosed disease too. Role of healthcare providers comes at different ways.

Dr. Hana Arbab shared her experience with attendees that she referred patient for the surgery even knowing there is no bed available. Even knowing this is high risk case. Doctor from Anesthesia’s team came for counselling. This is responsibility of healthcare providers that how they communicate.

Dr Hana Arbab told us two witnesses we get. The father who was agreed for the surgery and secondly he called his cousin to sign agreement form as a 2nd witness. But at last parents decided to take child at home because mother was not agreed.

Dr. Jamshed Akhtar added that laws and ethics have a component. We cannot separate them at all. Ethics is a part of law.

**Final statement from PBG**: Decision-making is a complex especially when it is for patients who cannot make their own decisions. The responsibility lies on parents, healthcare providers and the state. However, involving state and law should always be the last resort as it requires additional judgment of the risk of harm. When facing a complex decision-making for a baby when the parents have conflicting views, the best way forward is to remain unbiased (non-judgmental towards either parent), involve hospital ethics committee or ethicist as early as possible, involve multidisciplinary team (psycho-social support etc), communicate with the parents in fair, honest and trustworthy manner and to help them see the baby’s interests and risks of possible harms.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned by the moderator Dr. Sarosh Saleem with thanks to all attendees for their support, encouragement, and valuable contributions. The next meeting is scheduled for November 01, 2024, at 09:30 AM.

***Minutes Recorded by***

***Ms. Huda Behzad***