



Ethically Speaking...

Newsletter of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute
at Assumption University

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Ethically Speaking...

provides news and
from the Canadian Catholic
Bioethics Institute at
Assumption University.



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Windsor Essex Compassion Care Community : Brining Compassion to Life

María Giannotti BA, BEd, MAMS Bioethics

Compassion is the principled determination to put ourselves into the place of the other and it lies at the heart of all truly religious and ethical systems. I have the privilege of working with this amazing group of people and organizations who are determined to bring compassion to life. The Windsor Essex Compassion Care Community (WECCC) in collaboration with The Hospice of Windsor Essex County, have been working together with a unified vision to help people, who may be living in isolation, or with life-long disabilities/illness, or who may be facing end of life issues, get the support and social connections they need to live well throughout their life span.

A compassionate community is one that is motivated to take responsibility and care for one another, particularly those who are most vulnerable. It is not surprising, given our reputation, that Windsor Essex County is one of the first communities to take on the challenge of pioneering a new way forward. *"We have challenged ourselves to step up and stand out, to become Canada's most compassionate community"*



WINDSOR ESSEX
Compassion
Care Community

This initiative fits very well into Ontario's "Compassionate Communities" strategy which aims to promote whole person care and in doing so benefit patients family caregivers, and the formal health care system.

WECCC, as it is fondly known, is an innovative approach to social care and health care. It is a non-profit coalition bringing together over 300 champions and 100+ agencies and associations from education, health care, social services, municipal, faith/cultural communities, business, non-profit, informal volunteer and informal sectors. This county wide movement aims to provide access to many social aspects of care that are not provided by the health care system but which are central to the well-being of all people, particularly those who are most in vulnerable the community.

Simply put, WECCC looks to make our community more compassionate, more age friendly and a better place to live. It has been said "it takes a village to raise a child," it only makes sense that the same community should support the person through to the end of their journey in life, so that they may age and die with dignity and respect. WECCC is helping to accomplish this. The goal is to ensure aging citizens who need care and their care partners are able to organize care around the things that are most important to them, and have the support they need to live well. By orchestrating community talents, care becomes a collective effort for positive change. This helps improve quality of life for all of us.

Unlike other initiatives, this project is unique in that it takes on a broader mandate and recognizes we all need compassion not only in dealing with death and dying, but in living life well throughout the entire journey. It seeks to increase the happiness and connectedness of

everyone in the community, raise quality of life of citizens, and reduce the inequitable outcomes experienced by the most vulnerable.

To our knowledge, all of it together doesn't exist anywhere else in the world"
Deborah Sattler, Project Lead

The following services provided by WECCC are free to the community and are intended to help individuals and caregivers identify and meet their specific needs, enhance naturally occurring supportive networks, and

link to community resources in order to live their best possible life.

Programs Offered by WECCC include:

- ◆ **Advanced Care Planning (ACP)**
"In a medical emergency if you were unable to speak for yourself, who would speak for you and would they know what you want?" -

This is the essence of Advance Care Planning. Workshops and presentations that provide resources to understand Ontario's Law around ACP, Substitute Decision Making, and Power of Attorney for Personal Care, are offered to the community.

This services is available to groups as well as 1:1 sessions for those who would like help in completing the ACP process.

Who would speak for you



WE CARE Let's Talk: Offered as a scheduled drop-in workshop; 1:1 support available

Sharing My Journey (in-home support) :
1:1 support for person-directed goals and making community connections

Loneliness – A New Health Crisis :
Encourages people to do more of what they love to live the best quality of life. Stats show that 1 in 5 of us report feeling loneliness and it can be as harming as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. The workshops are offered in two sessions:

- ⇒ Part 1 Loneliness Impacts on Health
- ⇒ Part 2 Personal Strategies

Health Tapestry:
Led by McMaster University Department of Family Medicine, helps people stay healthier for longer in the places where they live by bringing together technology, volunteers, communities, interprofessional health care team.

If you are interested in any of these programs, know of someone who may benefit, or would like to volunteer with The Windsor Essex Compassion Care Community contact :

**Windsor Essex
Compassion Care Community
519-974-2581 Ext. 2420
Email. info@weccc.ca**



OP-ED: Equating the Status of Women with Abortion

by Rev. Leo Walsh CSB, STL, STD

I remember many years ago listening to a student at a Catholic theology school claiming to her classmates that women could never expect to be treated fairly by men unless they fought for and won the right to abort without restraint.

In Canada, this has come to pass; abortion up until birth is legal, no justifying cause asked. We do not have a person until birth.

In the *Globe and Mail* (Wednesday, July 10), Phyllis Baylis “one of Canada’s leading ethicists” sounds a warning against unregulated gene therapy, and in this she is correct. At the same time, she states explicitly that the human embryo is not a person and that most infertility and/or transference of defective genes can be handled by *in vitro* fertilization, where unsuitable embryos can be rejected. Later, she says emphatically that any attack on full abortion rights is an attack against the hard-won gains of women.

The same claims are made in a demented rant passing as a film review of the movie “Unplanned” in the *Globe and Mail*, Friday, July 12, p.A12. Here a certain Barry Weis spews unproven delusions as medically sound science.

The claim about the non-personal status of the embryo can be proclaimed without reference to sound arguments from philosophy and science proving otherwise. Instead, the personal status of the embryo is seen as the unsupported position of certain religious affiliations.

Women, especially Western women, have made long-awaited gains with respect to their very humanity. There are, though, still barriers to equality to be broken down. But why all of this should be tied to the question of abortion is far from clear.

Some particular tenets of Catholic morality can be difficult to accept when the whole context of the teaching is denied or ignored. It is understandable that some people see that certain cases of euthanasia be considered ethically sound; or that *in vitro* fertilization be seen as “for life” by individuals with no religious faith. But, again, why the killing of the unborn should be associated with the equal status of women beggars belief.

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Provides news, articles and information from the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute at Assumption University in Windsor, Ontario. We welcome comments and feedback. Should you have suggestions for future articles or inserts, please contact the Editor at:

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