



Department of Defense Medical Ethics Center (DMEC) *Charter*

A. Background: The Military Health System (MHS) and its military health care providers operate in a complex environment with multiple challenges to both the overall system and to its individual organizational members. They include, but are not limited to: ongoing medical support for combat operations worldwide, delivering high-quality care to service members and other beneficiaries, adopting new medical technologies, maintaining individual and institutional military medical readiness, working in a data-driven world and dealing with the issues of individual privacy, all while being responsible stewards of limited and precious resources. These influences create circumstances in which health care providers face medical ethics issues on a daily basis. Providing the Department of Defense (DoD) health care force a foundation upon which to analyze and determine the best course of action when facing medical ethics questions is fundamental to both saving lives and maintaining the military medical readiness of the MHS. Recognizing the importance of medical ethics, the Department of Defense issued DoD Instruction (DoDI) 6025.27 on November 8, 2017, with the overall goal of standardizing medical ethics training across the entire MHS/DoD. DoDI 6025.27 assigned certain responsibilities for military medical ethics training and management to the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU). In meeting these responsibilities, USU recognized that military medical ethics are inextricably linked to military medical leadership and professionalism. These related disciplines have become an increasingly important part of the USU curriculum as it educates and develops military health care professionals for the future.

For the purposes of this charter, and its associated programs, the term “medical” will include the entire range of health care providers and institutions throughout the MHS/DoD.

B. Purpose: This charter establishes the Department of Defense Medical Ethics Program Office within USU, to be known as the Department of Defense Medical Ethics Center (DMEC). The DMEC will operate under the direction of the President, USU. The DMEC will support the development, evaluation and implementation of a systematic and integrated Department of Defense Medical Ethics Program (DoDMEP) across the MHS/DoD. The DMEC will also be allied with USU’s educational curriculum and associated programs in order to develop and enhance professional military medical leadership within USU Students.

C. References

1. DoD Instruction 6025.27
2. USU Strategic Framework (2017-2021)

D. Mission: The mission of the DMEC is to serve as the national and international lead in military medical ethics for all health care providers in the MHS/DoD, as outlined in DoDI 6025.27, Section 2.3(a). In addition and internal to USU, the DMEC will coordinate its tasks in military medical ethics with USU's military medical leadership and professional development curriculum and programs to ensure that USU Students become ethical practitioners and leaders at all levels in the nation's uniformed health services.

E. Vision: The DMEC will assist in the development and implementation of the DoDMEP and will develop a plan for MHS-wide medical ethics training, as per Sections 2.2 and 4.3 of DoDI 6025.27. Moreover, the DMEC will develop and maintain a DoD Health Care Ethics Portal, as a centralized resource for medical ethics, and will be capable of receiving inquiries and requests for medical ethics consultation. The portal will also provide access to relevant policies, guidance and laws; sources of education and training; and pertinent codes of ethics. Internally within USU Schools, the DMEC will coordinate closely with programs for professional military medical leadership development in order to train and develop a new generation of military medical leaders and professionals solidly grounded in the highest standards of medical ethics.

F. Strategic Goals: Medical ethics is a system of moral and professional principles agreed upon by the practice community that govern the behavior of health care professionals and health care organizations. The DMEC's strategic goal is to assist in the development of the fundamental principles in military medical ethics and to promulgate those principles throughout the military health care professions. The DMEC's medical ethics tasks include:

1. Establish the DoDMEP Office, to be known as the DMEC, and provide staff to maintain and support the mission objective.
2. Participate in the development and implementation of guidance led by DASD(HSP&O).
3. Develop a plan for MHS training, as described in Paragraph 4.3 of the DoDI 6025.27.
4. Develop and maintain a DoD Health Care Ethics Portal at USU that will:
 - a. Serve as a centralized resource for medical ethics information and be capable of receiving inquiries and requests for consultation.
 - b. Provide links to relevant policies, guidance, and laws; information about sources of education and training; and pertinent professional codes of ethics.
5. Maintain a contact list of the designated subject matter experts in medical ethics. These individuals will provide consultative services and develop procedures to assist health care professionals, as described in Paragraph 4.2(a) in DoDI 6025.27, to include offering educational outreach when requested.

6. Coordinate with other government and academic Medical Ethics programs to share knowledge and experience.
7. Participate in the Medical Ethics Integrated Product Team (MEIPT) as defined in Section 6 of DoDI 6025.27.
8. Coordinate with the enhancement of the respective USU Schools' internal medical leadership development and professionalism curriculum and programs. In so doing, the DMEC will:
 - a. Advise and coordinate in aligning and harmonizing DoDMEP-oriented training, education and operational initiatives with broader military medical leadership development objectives focused on USU Students.
 - b. Ensure that issues of medical ethics are included in all key USU military medical leadership operations and exercises, from the classroom to field training exercises.
 - c. Coordinate in the establishment and refinement of measures of performance and metrics by which both medical ethics and military medical leadership development can be assessed.

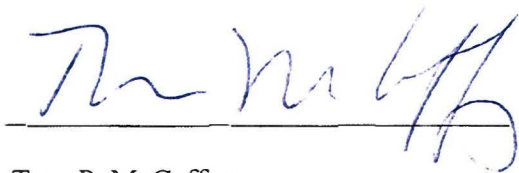
G. Governance. The DMEC will be led by a Director who will be appointed by the President, USU, and will serve at the pleasure of said President. The DMEC Director will also serve as the USU representative on the MEIPT, as a delegable position of authority. The DMEC Director may be of the uniformed health services – active or retired – and will possess the academic credentials necessary for appointment to the USU Faculty at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor.

H. Location: The DMEC will be located on a campus of USU.

I. Funding: The DMEC will be funded by USU in FY18, with bridge funding from OASD (HA) in FY19, until such time as the initiative can be sourced programmatically in a USU POM cycle in FY20 and beyond.

J. Duration of Charter: The need for this function is on a continuing basis. However, this charter is subject to renewal every five years.

K. Points of Contact: The OASD (HA) point of contact is the HA Chair of the MEIPT. The USU point of contact is the DMEC Director.



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Date: 6/3/18