MEDICAL ETHICS

Synopsis
While the art of medicine is often dominated by physical and technical considerations, doctors will also recognise that there are more subtle issues which make the way in which we use that technology meaningful. This area has to do with ethics, morality and law. In this unit the emphasis will be on the ethical decisions confronting doctors in daily practice. Topics covered include: the role of ethics in medical practice, philosophical ethics and principles in practice, ethical principles, critical perspectives, resource allocation, confidentiality and consent, life and death issues.

Objectives
By the completion of this unit students should be able to:

1. Develop a critical understanding of the scope of ethical issues and attitudes.
2. Explain the language and concepts which form the basis of ethical debate.
3. Reflect philosophically about the basis of beliefs and attitudes.
4. Recognise the delineation between what is an ethical and what is a legal argument.
5. Explain the overlap between what is an ethical and what is a legal argument.
6. Critique the role that cultural influences have on ethical decisions.
7. Articulate your awareness as a decision maker and the influences that personal factors can have on decisions.
8. Evaluate the interactions between the doctor and the health care system.

Assessment
Journal (60%)
Essay (20%)
Case commentary (20%)