Rationale:

1) Expand the number of meeting attendees presenting clinical ethics cases at SGIM meetings.
2) Increase exposure of clinical ethics as fascinating educational material with a discrete knowledge base and methodology.
3) Increase knowledge of members of SGIM regarding clinical ethics as valid and important source of didactic material.

We propose the addition of a new category of clinical vignette to expand the potential case base for submissions beyond traditional diagnostic and management dilemmas to include the more challenging ethical dilemmas that are common in clinical practice. Clinical ethics continues to be an evolving field with a burgeoning evidence-base to help support decisions and actions in real time. The time is ripe to expand the types of “great” cases that are presented at the SGIM meetings in the vignette session to reflect this important and growing clinical realm.

We hope to discuss with SGIM leadership the addition of new category or subset of clinical vignette which would accept submissions for the 2012 Annual meeting. As members of the SGIM Ethics Interest Group, we would help develop criteria for abstract submission, recruit reviewers, and moderate the vignette session.

We would develop a suggested framework to write the submission for cases based upon previous suggestions for writing clinical vignettes but tailored specifically to the types of cases which might be considered interesting from a clinical ethics perspective (such as how to determine if a patient has decision-making capacity, whether or not a patient’s care is futile). We could include suggestions for discussion of relevant literature.

We envision the format for this session to be similar to other vignette sessions, employing a moderator and a pre-selected group of presenters.

Proposed timeline (logistics/evaluation)

- We would develop the criteria (content and organization) of submissions. (2011 Ethic Interest Group meeting)
- We would identify reviewers by 12/11.
- Request for submissions would be sent to the general membership, the same way other session submissions are advertised. We would also inform members of the Ethics Interest Group personally as well as members of the SGIM Ethics Committee at the May 2011 meeting and via list-serve in 2011/12.
- We would comply with the selection dates suggested by SGIM leadership.
- We would communicate regarding planning for the session with program committee members.
- We would use the standard evaluation tool to evaluate the session. If development of a more specific tool is believe beneficial by SGIM leadership, we will develop such an instrument and use it for evaluation.