

How Bioethical Training is Essential to Patient Care

A graduate and a current student of the [Master of Arts in Bioethics program](#) talk about ways they use bioethical training as part of patient care:

Lisa Hammon, associate director of the Medical Center's Clinical Risk Management Department, was among the first class of students in 2009. She studied while working full time and received her degree in 2012. A registered nurse, Hammon has long been interested in bioethics. She has worked in surgical critical care, organ transplantation, and has served on the Clinical Ethics Committee since 1990.

"Risk management and ethics are partners in patient care at our hospital," Hammon explained. "Our role in risk management is to engage hospital faculty and staff in identifying systems issues that result in preventable harm to patients and resolving these issues to reduce future harm. Our ethical mandate is truth-telling when an event occurs, including both disclosure and apology for medical errors. These are all part of our commitment to keep patients and families safe through our Safety Starts Here program."

James Black, MD, a gynecologist at Lexington Medical Center, is finishing his coursework and preparing to write his thesis. Black, who has practiced medicine for 35 years, sees a burgeoning need for bioethical consultations as baby boomers swell the Medicare ranks. He sees his experience, combined with bioethical training, as a productive way to wind down his clinical career and transition to a second career teaching, writing and consulting about bioethics.

"I was looking for something to do post-clinical medicine," Black said. "I'm anticipating working until 2018, when I'll be 70. During that time, I could respond to clinical consultation requests anywhere within the Wake Forest Baptist Health system. I feel that I can bring to those consults some grassroots wisdom accumulated over many years of caring for local patients."

Credit: [Internal Communications](#)

Last Updated 4/30/2014