



## The Bioethics in the Clinical Laboratory

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### Abstract

Bioethics is the systematic study of human behavior in the field of life sciences and health care examined in the light of the values and moral principles, their application is essential in the clinical laboratory, thus ensuring the quality. To be ethical is to prevent unfair practices such as dichotomy. Being ethical in the laboratory is having internal and external quality programs, is to comply with the rules, regulations and good practices. In these practices there should be responsibility for the design, implementation, maintenance and improvement of de quality management systems, including policies and procedures to ensure the protection of confidential information, where ethical aspects are observed. Patient's well-being and Medical Relevance and fundamental premises. Each and every clinical laboratories should have a code of ethics. An ethical professional is a good professional.

**Keywords:** Bioethics; Quality; Laboratory

Ethics (from the Latin *ethicus*), according to the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy [1], in its 22<sup>nd</sup> edition, it is defined as: 1. Adj. pertaining to or relating to ethics; 2. Adj. straight according to morals; 3. m. of their, person who studies or teaches morals; 4. f. part of the philosophy that deals with the moral and obligations of man, and 5. f. Set of moral standards that govern human behavior.

Ethics is a word that we constantly hear from childhood in basic, middle and higher education. Schools of medicine, chemistry, nursing, social work and other careers related to health, as well as schools, non-governmental organizations, health congresses, are concerned and occupied by ethical issues. It is desirable that we all be ethical, but it is not always the case. And is that the ethical character is inherent in the act of truth. The truth is the primitive form of responsibility [2]. The ethics of being universal, tells us how we should be, while morality, being cultural and relative, is the set of rules that a society has.

Bioethics emerges as a result of the emergence of the human rights paradigm; the power and moral ambiguity of scientific and technological development, its implications for the survival of the human species and the well-being of people; as well as the care of the environment; and the problems of justice in the right to universal protection and access to health services [3]. In itself, medical practice, laboratory work requires a thorough knowledge updated, as well as *habilitada des* and skills, accompanied by ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, conscientious objection, helping good and Respect for human life that should serve as a purpose for the ethical performance of the doctor in general, of the health team. This must consider the individual identity of the patient, their essence, what gives them their value, in the same way that their inherent freedom and autonomy in nature is appreciated,

and not by their appearance, intelligence, age or degree of development, but out of respect for the dignity of the human being [4]. Quality and excellence in medical care is a claim of society.

There are changes in Medicine, the application of biotechnology is revolutionizing medicine and society needs to adapt to this circumstance since, in the opinion of some, it questions the known ways of life and, therefore, ethics and morals [5]. Bioethicists have been postulated goals in medicine, such as [6]:

- a) The prevention of disease and the promotion of health.
- b) The relief of pain and suffering.
- c) Healing and caring for the sick who have no cure.
- d) Preventing premature death and helping the good to die

We understand bioethics as the systematic study of human behavior in the field of life sciences and health care, examined in the light of value and moral principles [7]. Bioethics is a discipline What interests us all? Be ethical? Good or evil? Banish practices like the dichotomy; not to take actions that guarantee quality, is it correct? enrich yourself on the basis of fundamentally economic actions, can it be? In a globalized world where monetary gains are an achievement. Acting on moral and ethical grounds, and good practices in a laboratory is a requirement of always and current. Since bioethics is an essential component in medical care, teaching and research [8]. In Mexico, ethical aspects have been a concern; Since the last century, Dr. Ignacio Chávez, Dr. Manuel Velasco Suárez, Dr. Guillermo Soberón Acevedo, Dr. Ruy Pérez Tamayo, among others, have promoted bioethics in the search for the common good.

In reference to the Clinical Laboratory, ethical aspects have already been established in the Code of Ethics of the Pan American Health Organization, and in the ISO 15189 standard. Integrate ethics into the quality management systems and technical competence of the clinical laboratories, is to work for the suitability, the rights of patients and the control of internal and external quality assurance procedures [9].

The term bioethics, according to HV Potter, is a bridge between science and humanism (Bridge to the future) [10]. Considering bioethics as the study of human behavior in light of moral principles and values in which the principles of autonomy in which the patient has the right to go to the Laboratory that meets their needs of quality with full freedom, of charity that is manifested as offering the patient the best care with updated qualified personnel, that is, that the Laboratory complies with the referred to in established norms [11]. The nonmaleficence where the main thing is not to harm (*primum non nocere*), by giving a wrong data in the care of a patient can cause harm. And justice something that we all want to be a reality, that the benefits are distributed equitably, all this should be considered in the Laboratory.

The ethical aspects are considered for a long time, starting from the Oath of Hippocrates of Cos more than 2,000 years ago, which was applied to doctors when they finished their career; this oath is currently little read by doctors when they graduate, since it has been updated and has been replaced by the Geneva Declaration, or that of the World Medical Association, although all in essence have the spirit of the Hippocratic oath. One of the precepts of Hippocrates is *primum non nocere* not to hurt, and this is applicable in the Laboratory, since by not working with ethics, we can hurt by giving an incorrect data, and the doctor give an inadequate treatment. Thus, in compliance with standard 15189, ethics is incorporated for health laboratories. Where it stipulates that one must have responsibility for the design, implementation, maintenance and improvement of the quality management system, including policies and procedures to ensure protection of standard 15189, integrate ethics into quality management systems, where it is stipulated that clinical laboratories must work for the suitability, the rights of patients and the control of internal and external quality assurance procedures. Confidential information, where ethical aspects are contemplated. Therefore, every Clinical Laboratory should have a code of ethics.

Currently in Mexico, the Laboratories that comply with the accreditation of Standard 15189 are a minority [12]. If a Laboratory were to be questioned if it is ethical, I would probably say yes, that they are ethical, but this is true? If there is no document that shows a code of ethics, if a confidentiality agreement is not signed, if those who work in that laboratory are unaware, it will be difficult to comply with it. And, it is that in a laboratory you get confidential information, vital for your patient, so you must make sure that the results are reliable. Not doing it is defrauding a trust. A laboratory that respects itself must condemn the dichotomy, disloyal practice. The one that is difficult to eradicate, because the economic aspect intervenes, you win, I win, the patient loses. Hence the importance that from the training, in the schools of medicine, chemistry, biology, techniques, emphasis on the curricula on bioethics, it is at this

stage where it should influence, in youth. Since in the adult person already formed with an intellectual deformation, it is difficult for him to change his behavior. One strategy to end this form of corruption is education. The teacher Ignacio Chávez already said in his ideology [13], do not adore the golden calf, let's do good for the good. Recognizing that the ethical problems raised by the rapid advances in science and its technological application must be examined, taking into account not only respect for human dignity, but also universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms [14].

Bioethics and quality are two closely linked concepts that accompany our daily work. As a discipline, bioethics is, in part, an anticipatory field, since its theme is aimed not only at improving the quality of life of people in the present, but also at improving the conditions for generations that are yet to be born. One of the most peculiar characteristics of bioethics is that it constitutes a transdisciplinary field [15], since it is not only physicians and chemists who are part of the network of professionals interested in bioethics. The analysis and bioethical discussions involve all the professionals involved in the study of some discipline that has a direct relationship with life, that is why the moral mandate to do good, like the principles of social justice, provide us with sufficient reasons to justify the ethical - quality association. That is why in Laboratory, it is an indispensable condition that the actions we carry out are of total quality, considering good Laboratory practices, since these constitute a quality assurance system [16]. It is essential that all clinical laboratories have an internal and external quality control that is validated. We must do good for the good, this is where bioethics intervenes in public health policies. Promoting the study and observance of values and ethical principles in it is important not to neglect any detail, however minimal it may seem, in the Laboratory, the temperature control in the determination of enzymes, the proper washing of the glass material, the use of appropriate culture media, not using expired reagents, without forgetting the adequate training, in the diagnosis of an emerging parasite like *Cryptosporidium*, it is possible that we observe it, but we do not identify it, hence the importance of continuous training. And that of participating in quality improvement programs, both internal and external, as recommended by ISO/IEC 15189: 2007 [17] and 17043: 2010 [18]. As of June 10, 2013, there is PROMECAL [19], Program for the Improvement of Quality, Bioethics and Medical Relevance for Clinical Laboratories, which involves medical relevance and bioethics, as main components in the performance of healthcare professionals. Laboratory. As recommended by the Pan American Health Organization, in its Code of Ethics [20] and in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights [21], document adopted by UNESCO, in the 33<sup>rd</sup> conference held on October 19, 2005, where it establishes that the ethical problems caused by the rapid advances of science, and Its technological applications must be examined taking into account not only the respect due to the dignity of the human person, but also universal respect and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. If the professional of the Laboratory, is not constantly updated, does not meet the established standards. If you do not keep the ethical and moral principles is a bad professional, an unethical professional.

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