

PhD Completion Seminar: Caroline Ong

Moral Distress, Moral Equilibrium and the MEF

Supervisors:

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Wednesday, 14 October 2020



12:00noon to 1:00pm



Zoom Details: [https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/87802359833?](https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/87802359833?pwd=TU5iRVF1bG5xK056eXNPL094NFFMdz09)
pwd=TU5iRVF1bG5xK056eXNPL094NFFMdz09
Meeting ID: 878 0235 9833
Password: 141020



Moral distress conceptually, is the distress caused "when one knows the right thing to do, but institutional constraints make it nearly impossible to pursue the right course of action" (Jameton, 1984 p.6). After more than three decades of research, there is still no consensus on its definition. Nonetheless it is a significant phenomenon, which if left unattended, can negatively affect the well-being of health professionals, leading to poor outcomes for patients, the organisation and even the health sector.

Whilst much is known about moral distress in nurses in acute care, little is known about how moral distress is experienced by community healthcare professionals specialising in palliative care. This ethno- phenomenological study with such a group of health professionals, has helped fill this and other gaps in moral distress knowledge. This study highlights a dimension of the moral distress discourse not yet explored--moral equilibrium. The lived experiences of these health professionals was also the foundation of the novel Moral Equilibrium Framework.

Caroline Ong is a PhD research student at the Centre for Health Equity, and a part-time general medical practitioner. After over 20 years in general practice she pursued further studies completing her MA Bioethics and Health Policy (Chicago). She serves on two ethics committees and holds a fellowship with the RACGP. She is passionate about the possibility of a more integrated approach to medicine, ethics and life in general!