

Episode: *Author Interview: “How Should Focus Be Shifted From Individual Preference to Collective Wisdom for Patients at the End of Life With Antimicrobial-Resistant Infections?”*

Guest: Jeannie P. Cimiotti, PhD, RN

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript: Cheryl Green

[Access the podcast.](#)

[bright theme music]

[00:00:03] TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I’m your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Jeannie Cimiotti, an associate professor at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing and Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She’s also an adjunct associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr Cimiotti is here to discuss her article, coauthored with Drs Kimberly Adams Tufts, Lucia Wocial, and Elizabeth Peter, “*How Should Focus Be Shifted From Individual Preference to Collective Wisdom for Patients at the End of Life With Antimicrobial-Resistant Infections?*,” in the June 2024 issue of the Journal, [Antimicrobial Stewardship](#). Dr Cimiotti, thank you so much for being here.

DR JEANNIE CIMIOTTI: Thank you, Tim. It’s been an absolute pleasure to be invited to be part of this series and for providing the opportunity for me to really provide some insight into antibiotic resistance. [music fades]

[00:01:10] HOFF: So, what’s the main ethics point that you and your co-authors are making in your article?

CIMIOTTI: Well, I mean, we’re talking about end of life, and not providing antibiotics at the end of life, it doesn’t feel comfortable to many individuals. I honestly feel that it’s uncomfortable for providers and it’s uncomfortable for families and patients, but not prescribing at the end of life is not wrong. In fact, it’s the responsible thing to do. I think also, an important point is that it’s also time to shift from an exclusive focus on autonomy, where we allow individuals and their families to make informed treatment decisions—and in this case, antibiotics—to a more broad focus on equity and focus on the individuals that don’t have access to appropriate antibiotic therapy.

[00:02:15] HOFF: And so, what’s the most important thing for health professions students and trainees specifically to take from your article?

CIMIOTTI: There’s one, and it’s short and sweet. And that’s that antimicrobial stewardship is everyone’s responsibility, especially for those who are caring for patients nearing the end of their lives.

[00:02:35] HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to your article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

CIMIOTTI: I think an important point would be that antimicrobial stewardship for patients nearing the end of life requires us to engage in forthright discussions with patients who face life-limiting diseases earlier in the trajectory, rather than waiting until they are clearly at the end of their lives. I believe if we wait until late in the disease process, patients and their families are likely to request unrealistic treatment options hoping to extend life, including the use of inappropriate antibiotics. [theme music returns]

[00:03:22] HOFF: Dr Cimiotti, thank you so much for your time on the podcast today, and thanks to you and your co-authors for your contribution to the Journal this month.

CIMIOTTI: It's been an absolute pleasure.

HOFF: To read the full article, as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, journalofethics.org. We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.