



CENTRE FOR BIOETHICS

at Karolinska Institutet & Uppsala University



VIII Annual Symposium on Biomedicine, Ethics and Society: "Rethinking Informed Consent: The limits of autonomy"

Mark Lachmann
MD, MHSc (bioethics), CCFP
Chief of Staff, Baffin Region
Baffin Regional Hospital
Box 1000, Station 1036
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0
Canada
E-mail: mlachmann@gov.nu.ca

Consent and end-of-life care in the Canadian Arctic

The Inuit of the Canadian Arctic are a people who have gone through tremendous cultural change in the past fifty years. Health care is delivered with a focus on primary care in a cross-cultural context. Advanced hospital care is delivered many thousands of kilometers away from home and family. End-of-life care discussions are therefore tremendously important for the ill individual and his or her family. These discussions often revolve around where a death will occur, rather than the medical interventions which may or may not be employed at the end of life. Learning from end-of-life care planning with the Inuit we will explore consent as a community process developed to allow clinicians and patients and families to have a structured conversation around shared meanings. It is argued that a shared meaning approach to consent is applicable in other clinical and research settings.