Annotated Bibliography Topic: Informed Consent


This article gives good insight on informed consent and how it falls under ethically and legal situations. It describes the purpose of informed consent and how some situations make it difficult to comply to the standards of informed consent. The main purpose of informed consent is to protect the patient and their rights whether it be ethical or legal. A big part of informed consent is if the patient can give it, it's hard when the patient cannot reciprocate to the doctors, they should be able to understand and what is going on with the research or whatever they are volunteering themselves for.

The legal aspect of informed consent protects them against any assaults or unwanted medical intervention. The only problem with the legal aspect of informed consent is that it varies across different jurisdictions, and it keeps
evolving over time so views keep changing. The main two different views are the newer ones that back the persons while the other is the older one of that of the physician. In most cases it just depends on what standard best fits the case at hand but its normally physician based.

The ethical view on the other hand is a little different according to the article it is known as more abstract unlike the legal standards. This one leads more toward the patient standards because they just want to do what the patient wants and base it off of them. They choose what's best based off the patient's current condition because they just want the best for them. An example the article states is about undergoing dialysis or even chemotherapy.

People back then didn't even have the privilege of even getting informed consent, first place. People normally had no idea what was going on with their body samples that were being used. This ended up causing people's family a great deal of pain when they finally found out about it and they couldn't get any compensation or do anything about it. This is one of the reasons why the is such a big deal these days and people are being more cautious about informed consent especially with research.

This book shows the story of Henrietta lacks and how informed consent was not present with her interaction with doctors and their research on her. This was a big deal because since there was no informed consent she couldn't even tell her family what was going on because she herself had no idea. The doctors told her nothing about how her cells caused a breakthrough in the medical world. This leads to grief for the family when they found out many years later. This book shows the importance of informed consent.

Henrietta got into this situation when she was having pains in her abdomen and went to the doctors to get it looks at. Despite her sisters and friends telling her she was fine she knew that something was just not right. The doctor took sample of her cervics where she said she felt the bump. The doctor had never seen anything like it so he took some of it to test it. It ended up being cancer but she was never told her cells were going to another doctor, who later cultured them and found the first immortal cell line. He started giving them away and people began buying them for loads of money and Henrietta had no idea about any of this. She sat home sick and dying from cancer, the secret of her immortal cell line died with her and her family never knew, until years later.

The family had to deal with a lot when they found out that there mother was still “alive” they couldn't believe it and didn't know what to think. They weren't very educated so they couldn't really grasp the idea of it, but they tried to get compensation and their voices heard for years and finally when this book
became published they got what they had been yearning for, for years. All of this
could have been avoided the secrets, the grief, the hurt. If the doctors hadn't fail
to ask for informed consent from Henrietta many years ago. This is why informed
consent is so important to this day and has become a big issue and people don't
just let it slide by, now they demand it.

Mandal, Jharna, Srinivas Acharya, and Subhash Chandra Parija. "Ethics in Human

In this article it discusses a couple of different incidents that took place with
unethical informed consent issues. For example the Nuremberg Trial, the
Tuskegee Syphilis Study. These were horrible events to take place and both very
unethical they went against all morals and even the Hippocratic oath. After these
events had occurred the article further proceeds to state the precautions they
took after these events took place. They tried to put standards, regulations, and
rules on these types of things.

Some of these regulations were the Declaration of Helsinki and the Belmont
Report. The Declaration of Helsinki was not very effective at first it was only a
suggestion or recommendation for doctors to use when doing research on
humans. Later when it was revised it became better and more effective and we
still practice these good ideas even today. It hasn't fixed the problem there are
definitely still loopholes but, it has improved a lot since back in the 1900s. The other one was the Belmont Report which states the basic rules and guidelines for researches and doctors on informed consent and doing research on people. It is meant to help solve the ethical problems around human experiments and research, of course it doesn't solve them all just like the Declaration of Helsinki but it does its best to keep people in line and following the rules. Its main focus is on three main parts: Respect for Persons, Beneficence, and Justice. Lastly is the Common rule I think this one puts everything into perspective and help people stick to the rules the most because there are a lot more requirements that are official and they aren't just suggestions like the others that have to be followed. For instance like your research has to go through the IRB (institutional review board) to get approved first, then numerous other requirements to follow.

If these precautions and regulations would have been followed as strictly as they are today people who had issues dealing with informed consent wouldn't have had to go through the pain and stress that they had to deal with for there whole life almost. These restrictions keep people in check and don't let the be inhumane or unethical in their researches and it makes sure that the patients who are consenting know exactly what is going on during the experiment and then don't have to do it if they don't want to.
The Nuremberg Trials were one of the first incidents to cause a commotion about being ethically right and ending informed consent on patients who were participating in the trials. The scientist who were doing the experiments tried to excuse their horrendous behavior by saying that there were no rules regarding whether there needed to be informed consent or not, this was not true however. In place of this awful happening they put in place the Nuremberg Code to try and fix the problem and make sure it never occurred again.

The Nuremberg Trials happened because of the Neisser Case. This was where he injected patients some healthy other who already had different medical diseases with syphilis, and gave them a “vaccination”. The vaccination never seemed to worked on his patients and they had no idea they were being injected with syphilis, and there was no informed consent. His patients mostly consisted of prostitutes who were not informed about anything that was happening and had no idea what was really going on. Most doctors at this time had even agreed with what Neisser was doing to these people, and when he finally got in trouble for what he was doing it was for the experiments he was preforming on the people, but only because he had not asked for consent. He was told that his “trial were harmless” which is very false.
The Nuremberg Code now states that to minimize hurting humans through experimentation that there will need to be animal experimentation before they do any kind of experiments on humans. Other than the Nuremberg ode they made even more stricter regulations to keep human experimentation in check and made sure that it did not get out of hand again and fix the problem at hand that was very unethical. Human experimentation on dying patients was not allowed under any circumstances and they weren't allowed to just give out information about a person to the public without their consent. The Nuremberg Code really was one of the first efforts to stop unethical human experimentation.


Today informed consent is a must when it comes to research, surgery, and mostly all medical activities, it wasn't always like this though it was very different years ago. It is every persons right to wether or not they want to be included in research or an experiment, or anything with research. There are two very different types of consent one is implied while the other is expressed consent. They are two very different forms of consent but both are needed either way.
Implied or otherwise known as implicit consent is mainly just used for simple and routine procedures, nothing major. Like for example just a routine physical examination. Expressed or explicit consent on the other is very different. This consent is for much bigger and serious situations such as invasive or risky procedures. This consent can be either oral or written but it is preferred that it is written in case there are issues down the road or if they have follow up appointment. Consent is not only necessary in procedures and physical contact but also with taking pictures of the person as well and especially if the person’s identity is going to be revealed.

There are also pre-requisites to giving informed consent just as there are no problems with anything. They must be an adult and know fully aware of what is going on and understand the circumstances. If it is a child they cannot give consent it has to be the parent who gives the consent. They also have to pass the “Prudent Patient Test” to see if the patient is reasonable or average. This is hard to do because all patients are different and have different views on things. For instance some patients are more ignorant than others and can't comprehend the full extent of what they need so they leave it up to the doctors. Or another example is some patients definition of risk is very different than others. When giving consent it can't just be broad it has to be about a specific thing or event taking place, also the patient has the right to back out of consent at any time this is called informed refusal. Consent is not only ethical but is also a legal compulsion.