



This past spring the NYCDS Ethics Committee, along with the Student Professionalism and Ethics Association (SPEA) of Columbia College of Dental Medicine, held a panel event on “Insights and Candor on Ethical Issues” at NYCDS for dental students, residents and young professionals. SPEA is a national student-led organization dedicated to “promoting and supporting a student’s lifelong commitment to ethical behavior in order to benefit the patients they serve and to further the dental profession.” The majority of the dental schools in the country have a SPEA chapter.

For the program, the Columbia SPEA students developed questions for the panelists on the topics of Ethics and Professionalism as it related to both dental insurance and developing alternative treatment plans for patients.

Some of the questions included:

***May a dentist do costly work before a patient’s insurance ends (that they potentially would not have done immediately had it not been ending)?**

***Can a dentist charge different rates when they bill as “in-network providers” versus when they bill their “self-pay.”**

***In terms of alternative treatment plans, how can you ensure you have informed consent when explanation of risk/benefit often requires a significant level of dental literacy which is not easily provided in a short conversation with the patient?**

***What are some emerging newer alternative treatments that are on the horizon and what are the ethical implications of incorporating these treatments into dental practice?**

For the attendees, hearing directly from dentists about their real-world experiences dealing with these issues was particularly compelling. The panelists elaborated on the complexity of each issue raised then shared the core professional values that guide them in their decision making.

“As a dental student, this kind of experience is invaluable as it allows me to consider early on, aspects of practicing dentistry that I will be exposed to later, and helps me feel more prepared. This event certainly helped promote enthusiasm for discussing ethics and was one of our most well-attended student events this year! I hope to see collaboration between NYCDS and SPEA continue and grow in the future.”

- Columbia SPEA President
Sophia Jelke


Panelists included Drs. Richard Levenson (president, NYCDS), David Momtaheni (chair, Member Benefits Committee), Mitchell Rubinstein (CE Director, Ethics Committee member), and Jaskaren Randhawa and Andrew Deutch (co-chairs of the Young Professionals Committee). The panelists were asked to frame their responses using the NYSDA Code of Ethics as a reference

point. The Code, similar to the ADA Code of Ethics, can be found on NYSDA’s website if you log-in as a member dentist.

Ethics Committee members Drs. Larry Bailey, Gail Schupak, Layne Martin and Jennifer Reyes were also in attendance to answer questions and interact with the attendees during the pre-panel reception. The students were grateful for the participation of the member dentists from NYCDS and the evening was generally well-received.

If you are interested in watching the panel discussion, it was streamed on Facebook Live. It is now available to view on Facebook through the NYCDS website. Visit www.nycdentalsociety.org and click on the New Dentist Events tab (found in Events and Continuing Education) to find the video of the event. If you are interested in learning more about SPEA, visit their website www.speadental.org.



 Our first Facebook Live was a success! Stream our Insights and Candor on Ethical Issues panel discussion on our facebook page: [@nycds622](https://www.facebook.com/nycds622).

You can view the video on our Facebook page by visiting:

