

John Dossetor
Health Ethics
Centre



HEALTH ETHICS SEMINAR

2025-
2026
SERIES

Exploring Families' Experiences with End-of-Life Care and Processing the Death of their Child in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit



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Thursday, 9 April 2026
12:00 - 13:00 MDT
ONLINE via Zoom application
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The purpose of this study is to explore how families experience end-of-life care (EOLC) in the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) during the death of their child. High-quality EOLC can improve families' last moments with their child and better prepare them for the bereavement process. However, existing research highlights ongoing challenges, including limited resources, insufficient training for nurses, and difficulties integrating cultural, spiritual, and contextual factors into practice. Many families report anxiety, depression, and regret related to decisions made around the time of their child's death. Using an interpretive description methodology, family experiences with EOLC practices in the PICU were examined through semi-structured interviews. Preliminary findings indicate a need for enhanced training for critical care nurses and stronger bereavement follow-up support for families. The study aims to translate these findings into practical recommendations to strengthen EOLC practices in PICUs that uphold the dignity of the dying process and advance nursing competency in this ethically complex and under-researched area of care.

More information: please call 780-492-6676, e-mail dossetor.centre@ualberta.ca or visit the [Dossetor Centre website](#).

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