THE JOURNAL OF
LAW, MEDICINE & ETHICS

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VOLUME 39:2 • SUMMER 2011

SYMPOSIUM

Cost and End-of-Life Care

Guest Edited by Thaddeus M. Pope, Robert M. Arnold, and Amber E. Barnato

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Symposium Articles

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est between shareholders doing well and terminal patients dying well. Yet, empirical data analyzing the experience of patients across the hospice industry are limited, and general claims that end-of-life patient care is inferior among for-profit providers or even that their business practices are somehow unseemly when compared to nonprofit providers cannot be substantiated. In fact, non-profit providers are not immune to potentially conflicting concerns regarding financial viability (i.e., "no margin, no mission"). Given the limitations of existing empirical data and contrasting ideological commitments of for-profit versus non-profit providers, the questions raised by this article highlight important areas for reflection and further study. Policymakers and regulators are cautioned to keep ethical concerns in the fore as an increasingly commercialized hospice industry continues to emerge as a dominant component of the U.S. health care system. Both practitioners and researchers are encouraged to expand their efforts to better understand how business practices and commercial interests may compromise the death process of the patient and patient's family — a process premised upon a philosophy and ethical tradition that earlier generations of hospice providers and proponents established as a trusted, end-of-life alternative.

Independents

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Symposium articles *are solicited by the guest editor for the purposes of creating a comprehensive and definitive collection of articles on a topic relevant to the study of law, medicine and ethics. Each article is peer reviewed.*

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