



Nova Scotia  
**Health Ethics**  
Network

# **“Tightening the Belt (Yet Again): Ethics and Health System Sustainability”**

NSHEN Telehealth Session  
May 17, 2011



# Panel

- **Christy Simpson**

- Associate Professor, Department of Bioethics, Dalhousie University
- Capital Health Ethics Support (CHES)

- **Brent Powers**

- Director, Medical Services Administration, CDHA

- **Allan Horsburgh**

- Vice President, Operations and Support Services, IWK

# Health System Sustainability

- **Media coverage**
- **CMA Town Halls**
- **Various reports**
- **Public expectations**

# Cases

- **Herceptin availability in Ontario**
- **Baby Joseph (tracheotomy for terminally ill infant)**
- **Early earlobe construction surgery**
- **Re-use of single-use devices**

# Discussion Question

- **What does sustainability in health care mean to you?**

# Discussion Question

- **What would you identify as some of the “typical” ways in which you grapple with questions around ethics and sustainability in your practice?**

# Discussion Question

- **What would you identify as some of the current barriers or challenges to health system sustainability?**

# Discussion Question

- **What are some of the values associated with the challenges you've identified to health system sustainability?**

# Discussion Question

- **What practices or strategies contribute to health system sustainability, from your perspective?**

# Open Discussion

- **Other questions**

- Is it fair to blame pharma/device manufacturers/ administration for the health system becoming unsustainable?
- Is the notion of “medical necessity” contributing to the problems around sustainability?
- Are public expectations for the health system unreasonably high?
- Do individuals have a duty to contribute to health system sustainability through their “lifestyle” choices?
- What are the connections between environmental and health system sustainability?

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