

Curriculum vitae

Born February 3rd 1929 in Bunzlau, Silesia (today Bosleslawiec/Poland)

1940 - 1944 Boarding school in Bunzlau

1951 - 1956 Fields of studies in philosophy and theology in Erlangen, Heidelberg and Münster, 1959 PHD in theology

1955 - 1966 Teacher in the protestant Paul-Gerhard-boarding school in Dassel

1966 - 1973 Teaching at the theological academy in Celle-Hermannsburg

1973 - 1994 Appointed as member of the Board of Directors of the v. Bodelschwingschen Stiftungen Bethel with the main responsibility for primary, secondary and vocational schools and the institutions for social and vocational education of young adults with epilepsy

1982 - 1999 Activities in the field of epileptology - member of the Board of Trustees for epilepsy, head of the national Information Center, involved in the development of an epilepsy surgery program in the Epilepsy Center Bethel

Since 1993 teaching at the University of Bielefeld as professor of education

1964 -1999 executive director of the hospital "Ev. Krankenhaus Bielefeld", establishment of a clinical ethics committee

March 26th 2004 died in Bielefeld

Main focus of his work

Consequences of societal change

Diversity in cultural and religious positions, individualism, mobility and instability characterize our current society.

Education

Education was pivotal to solve the problems emerging from societal change. Numerous schools, seminars and other educational institutions were inaugurated during the active work time of Hans Joachim Schwager.

According to him, education is not limited to professional knowledge, but includes political, religious and historical aspects as well as the reasoning with the afflicted persons about their condition.

Inclusion and Participation

Long before antidiscrimination legislation with respect to persons with disabilities emerged in Germany, Hans Joachim Schwager engaged in supporting the inclusion, participation and autonomous decisions of persons with multiple handicaps. He acknowledged the social background of deficiencies and the necessity of society to develop tools overcoming barriers: To participate, shape and get involved in life is a common aim of all persons, independent of their impairments. This was his credo.

Hans Joachim Schwager was concerned with the development of structures to introduce "informed consent" in patient care. Anticipating misunderstanding and opposition among staff, he initiated discussions, lectures and panels thus acting as a role model for creating consent.

Clinical Ethics

International Co-operation

His responsibility for the field of epilepsy in Bethel and the intention to implement an epilepsy surgery program in Bethel led to an intensive co-operation with the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio, USA. Soon, ethical questions with respect to this (elective) brain surgery broadened the view on treatment decisions in general; experts were included in the process of implementing clinical ethics. Prof. Kanoti and Prof. Agich from Cleveland, Prof. Reiter-Theil from Basel and Prof. Sass from Bochum complemented the expert group.

The Clinical Ethics Program and Committee

Clinical ethics developed as a common practice internationally under changing (societal) conditions, which focused on treatment decisions and connected ethical dilemmas. The autonomy and the respect for the personal choices of the patient were the starting points for ethics. Paternalism in patient care was seen as outdated, and shared deliberation was seen as a prerequisite for consent. Clinical ethics was justified through this process of common deliberation about patient's preferences and hospital's values.

In Bielefeld, Hans Joachim Schwager started the practice of sound communication and ethical deliberation in clinical practice. Since then patients and surrogates are regularly engaged in the process of shared discussion with health professionals.

Forum ICCEC

The International Conference on Clinical Ethics and Consultation was initiated in 2000 out of a conversation with H.J. Schwager with the aims to bridge the gap between academic and clinical ethics (CE) and to establish an ongoing international discussion about concepts, practise and evaluation of the field.

The conferences and award winners

- 2003 Cleveland, Ohio / USA
- 2005 in Basel / Switzerland
- 2007 Toronto / Canada
- 2008 Rijeka / Croatia
- 2009 Taipei / Taiwan
- 2010 Portland, Oregon / USA
- 2011 Amsterdam / The Netherlands
- 2012 Sao Paulo / Brazil
- 2013 Munich / Germany
 - *Hugo Gold, The Royal Children's Hospital Bioethics Centre, Melbourne, Australia*
- 2014 Paris /France
 - *Timo Sauer, Frankfurter Netzwerk "Ethik in der Altenpflege", Germany*
- 2015 NYC / USA
 - *No awardee*
- 2016 Washington, DC / USA
 - *Silviya Aleksandrova-Yankulovska, Med. University of Pleuven, Bulgaria*
- 2017 Singapore
 - *M. Murat Civaner, Uludag Univ. School of Medicine, Bursa, Turkey*
- 2018 Oxford / UK
 - *Joe Brierley, The Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, London, GB*
- 2019 Vienna / Austria
 - *No awardee*
- 2021 Cape Town / South Africa
 - *Sarosh Saleem, Shalamar Medical & Dental College Bioethics Centre, Lahore, Pakistan*

Hans J. Schwager Award for Clinical Ethics

The award aims at individuals or groups, who perform innovative or pioneer work in clinical ethics. As the implementation of a clinical ethics program often needs stamina and courage, the award is intended to encourage and support these initiatives.

Award Presentation Ceremony

During the ICCEC 2023 in Rome, Italy, the Jury will present the Hans Joachim Schwager Award with a total value of 5,000 Euro for the sixth time.

Application and dates

Applications are welcome from individuals and groups with documented activities of implementation of clinical ethics. Application should include a written report of the activities in the field of clinical ethics and of challenges during the process. A description of how obstacles were mastered should complement the application. All written communications have to be submitted in English. Applicants should send their application 10-20 (maximum) pages vial e-mail (format pdf).

Deadline for application is December 1st, 2022.

Application to:

Klaus Kobert, MD
Evangelisches Klinikum Bethel
klaus.kobert@evkb.de

For more information, visit the websites:

www.clinical-ethics.org
www.bethel.de

The Board of Directors of the v. Bodelschwingschen Stiftungen Bethel sponsor the Hans Joachim Schwager Award for Clinical Ethics and present the prize together with the ICCEC leadership.

Hans Joachim Schwager Award for Clinical Ethics 2022 - 2023

