

# Citizens' Assembly

## Medical Regulation, medical decision making and opting out...

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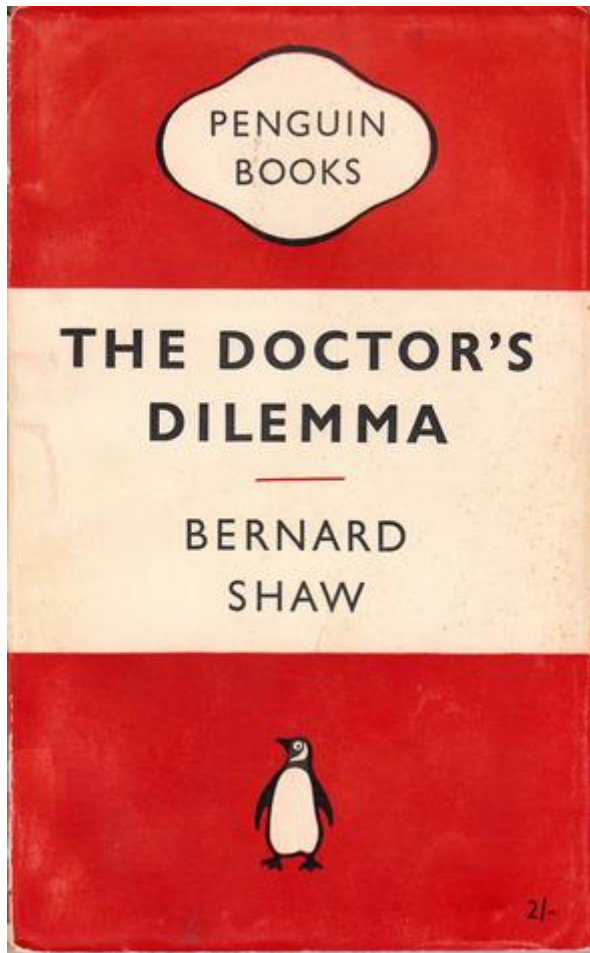
Jan 2017





# Dilemmas in medicine...

- difficult options, equally undesirable?



1906

Moral dilemmas in medicine

How to stretch limited resources

Medicine as a business

# Dilemmas in medicine...

‘Don’t tell him the bad news...’

Tough choices:

Individual vs population needs  
(immunisation, resources...)

Withdrawing treatments

Uncomfortable issues:

Conflict

End-of-life care

Unplanned pregnancy

# Dilemmas in medicine...

## How should a doctor approach a dilemma?

- What does the law say?
- Guidance available from the professional/ethics body?
- Scientific evidence on the subject?
- What are your personal views and values?

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# Medical Council

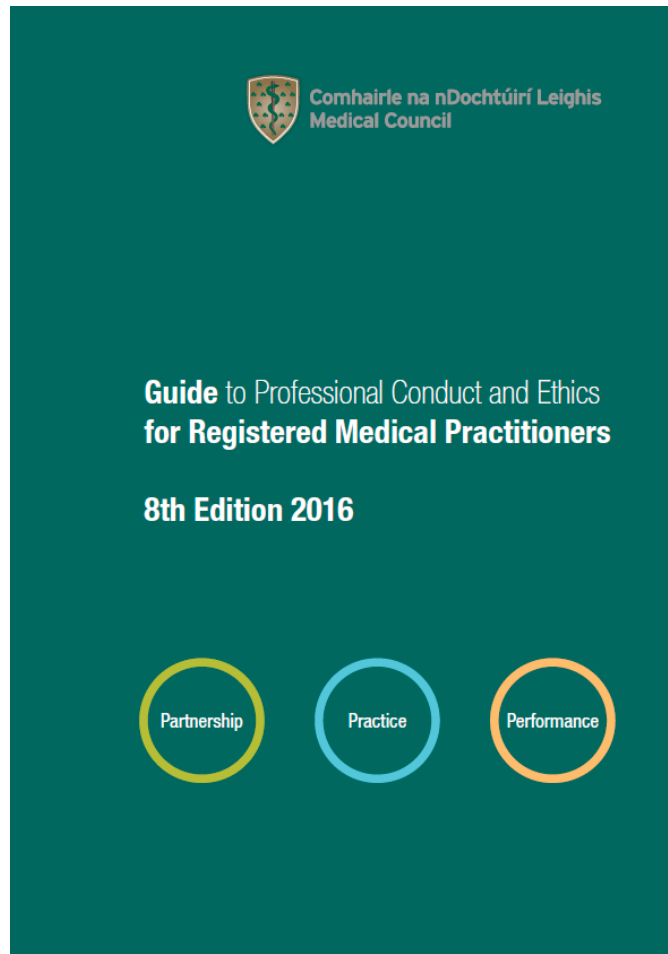
## **Purpose (MPA1978, MPA2007)**

To protect the interests of the public when dealing with a registered medical practitioner

## **Tools**

- Registration
- Education and training standards / accreditation
- Fitness to Practise
- Professional guidance

# Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics 8<sup>th</sup> Ed, 2016



Acknowledges difficult issues

Act in the patient's best interests

Be guided by your patient, but...

Requests can be refused

You may opt out



# Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics 8<sup>th</sup> Ed, 2016

## Abortion

- ‘...it may be necessary to terminate the pregnancy to protect the life of the mother while making every effort to preserve the life of the baby.’
- ‘Abortion is legally permissible where there is a real and substantial risk to the life of the woman which cannot be prevented by other means.’
- ‘It is lawful to give information subject to strict conditions.’

# **Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics 8<sup>th</sup> Ed, 2016**

## **Conscientious objection**

- ‘You may refuse to provide or take part in lawful treatments or forms of care which conflict with your sincerely held moral or ethical values.’

# Values and attitudes



Reflection

Risk vs benefit?

Discussion with colleagues

Beware the traps

# **Assisted Capacity (Decision-Making) Act 2015**

S83(2) A relevant person...is entitled to refuse treatment...notwithstanding that the refusal –

...

(c) may result in his or her death.

## **Medical Council, 2016**

‘In an emergency, where consent cannot be obtained, you should provide treatment...limited to what is immediately necessary to save a life...’

# **In summary**

## **How should a doctor approach a dilemma?**

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