

The Law and Ethics of Dementia



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Dementia is a topic of enormous human, medical, economic, legal and ethical importance. Its importance grows as more of us live longer. The legal and ethical problems it raises are complex, intertwined and underdiscussed. This book brings together contributions from clinicians, lawyers and ethicists ? all of them world leaders in the field of dementia ? and is a comprehensive, scholarly yet accessible library of all the main (and many of the fringe) perspectives. It begins with the medical facts: what is dementia? Who gets it? What are the current and future therapeutic and palliative options? What are the main challenges for medical and nursing care? The story is then taken up by the ethicists, who grapple with questions such as: is it legitimate to lie to dementia patients if that is a kind thing to do? Who is the person whose memory, preferences and personality have all been transformed by their disease? Should any constraints be placed on the sexual activity of patients? Are GPS tracking devices an unpardonable interference with the patient's freedom? These issues, and many more, are then examined through legal lenses. The book closes with accounts from dementia sufferers and their carers. It is the first and only book of its kind, and the authoritative text.

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