

## Ethics of occupational medicine in Qatargas

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### Introduction and Background

Ethics, as a standard, is focused on the way people behave when they are faced with conflicts between two or more principles to which they subscribe. The four traditional pillars of medical ethics namely autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice are frequently challenged in occupational medicine day-to-day practice.

### Aim

This contribution focuses on ethical dilemmas in the practice of occupational medicine.

### Challenges and Resolutions

The Occupational Health Physician (OHP) is responsible for case management; for most of the

challenges and conflicts there is no single correct solution and the doctor has to decide the best possible solution.

### 1-Medical confidentiality

If the employee has initiated consultation, the information should be kept in strict confidence. If the management has requested Functional Capacity Assessment to assess the employee's fitness capabilities or to retire on a disability pension, the result is passed on to the management. It is important to take informed consent from the employee before the information is shared with the management.

### 2-Business ethics

The Occupational Health Physician should abide by the code of ethics followed by their employers and comply with rules of the Supreme Council of Health.

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### 3-Teamwork

The Occupational Health Physician will work closely with health and safety professionals as occupational hygienists and safety professionals. Exchange of information is important but scrupulous care must be taken to safeguard medical confidentiality.

### 4-Salient Features

- I. OHPs are called for advice on the nature or extent of work related health risks to employees, to the workforce, to the environment or to the public.
- II. OHPs may provide primary medical care, in addition to their Occupational Medical advice – this may risk a conflict of interest. Put the interest of the employee first and make a decision and seek alternative advice from the medical panel (MOPH).
- III. Ethically, OHPs should disclose records and reports to the employees and maintain openness.
- IV. The discussion with the management should focus on Functional Capacity Assessment rather than the diagnosis of the medical condition.
- V. In the event of newer hazards, OHPs should try his level best to persuade the management to reveal the information to the employees for the sake of prevention.

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### References

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### **About the authors**

Dr. Osama is a regional expert and focal decision maker in occupational medicine, leadership and industrial primary care. He is the key founder of Qatargas medical department. Over the past 20 years, Dr. Osama had established multiple fully-fledged innovative medical service providers onshore, offshore and primary care for employees and dependents. His special interests include clinical internal medicine, leadership and quality improvement. His research activities have focused on Patient Centeredness and Value based care in occupational medicine and primary care. Dr. Osama has introduced the concept of international accreditation into Qatargas clinics and successfully led his teams towards JCI accreditation in 2012, 2015 and 2018. Dr. Osama is a member of the American College of Occupational and Environmental medicine.

Dr. Walid is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, specialist of Internal medicine with special interest in occupational medicine and healthcare management. He has worked in Qatargas as senior medical doctor and Doctor in Charge for Plant and Offshore since 2009. During this time, he founded the clinical audit program and successfully led his team towards JCI accreditation in 2012, 2015 and 2018. Before joining Qatargas, Dr. Walid worked in the International Medical center in Cairo, Egypt as specialist of Gastroenterology and Internal medicine from 2005 until 2009. During this time, he founded the preventive medicine and primary care division and contributed towards successful ISO accreditation. Dr. Walid is licentiate of the faculty of occupational medicine at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Dr. Syed is an Occupational Health Physician, Qatargas Company. He previously worked for DPC/ ConocoPhillips/Petrofac/Crescent Petroleum, UAE. He holds the MBBS degree from Nagarjuna University India and the Diploma for Child Health, National University of Ireland. He trained in Occupational medicine, IOEM, at the University of Birmingham, UK and holds a Diploma in Occupational Medicine from the Royal College of Physicians London. With 26 years of experience in the Oil Gas Industry/ Remote Healthcare, he has held various leading roles in Occupational health and Emergency Medicine. In addition, he has made significant contributions in Postgraduate education/training, and is an MFOM Examiner. Dr. Syed holds expertise in interpretation/analysis of data/legislation for development and implementation of Occupational Health Management systems. His medical interests include sickness absence, Fitness to Work, Heat Stress, Audiometry Testing, Respiratory Protection & Colour Vision.