Between Autonomy and Beneficence:
Ethical Dilemmas of DNR Orders by Patients with Suicidal Ideations

Do-Not-Resuscitate orders are increasingly being drafted, also by individuals with suicidal ideations. This development presents a complex ethical dilemma in clinical care: while protecting the vulnerable is a core value in psychiatry, rooted in the principle of beneficence, does this justify overriding a patient's autonomous request to refuse urgent care?

Currently, there are no guidelines addressing this situation. Early findings indicate that psychiatrists and other physicians incorporate fundamental ethical themes in their decision-making process. At the same time, research on this subject remains scarce, and fundamental differences of opinion exist among both ethicists and clinicians regarding how these dilemmas should be understood and managed in practice.

In this session, we will highlight the current gaps in knowledge and outline the steps being taken within the ongoing DORES research project. We will present preliminary insights and invite participants to share and discuss their perspectives from both clinical practice and philosophical frameworks.