Palliative care is a rapidly growing area within health care and one in which there are many ethical dilemmas. Chronically and terminally ill patients increasingly wish to take control of their own lives and deaths, resources are scarce and technology has created controversial life-prolonging treatment.

A central theme, that technical expertise must be controlled by humane, non-technical judgements, runs through the challenging and thoughtful text. Palliative Care Ethics, in this second edition, is now more user-friendly and includes genuine case histories to illustrate ethical issues in the real world. The authors have expanded the section on rationing in response to the changing health care environment and confront the issues of patient rights to a far greater extent. There is also a new chapter covering terminally ill children. As the philosophy of palliation is increasingly recognised to be important from diagnosis, the coverage of more general cancer care ethics has been much increased.