

Episode: *Author Interview: “How Should Clinicians and Health Care Organizations Respond When Civic Planning Concentrates Waste Processing in Minoritized Communities?”*

Guest: Megan Chao Smith, RN

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript by: Cheryl Green

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[bright theme music]

TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the *Author Interview series* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I'm your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative format for accessing the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Megan Chao Smith, an adjunct faculty member in the School of Nursing at St Catherine University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. They're here to discuss their article, coauthored with Dr Shanda Demorest, *How Should Clinicians and Health Care Organizations Respond When Civic Planning Concentrates Waste Processing in Minoritized Communities?*, in the October 2022 issue of the Journal, [Health Care Waste](#). Megan Chao Smith, thank you so much for being on the podcast with me. [music fades]

MEGAN CHAO SMITH: Thanks for having me, Tim.

HOFF: To begin with, what's the main ethics point that you and Dr Demorest are making in this article?

CHAO SMITH: We want to highlight one aspect of health equity that gets overlooked, that the very institutions people turn to for healing and health services are actually a part of severe health problems for patients. And instead of waiting for institutions to change, we as clinicians and individuals across the board interdisciplinary can ID the problem and make change today from the ground up.

HOFF: And so, what do you see as the most important thing for health professions students and trainees to take from this article?

CHAO SMITH: I would say when assessing patients, open your eyes to the larger or macro health risks for patients, that it could be an environmental risk. Also, be aware that whatever our intention is as a medical or health care worker, we're part of institutional harm to our patients, such as environmental waste and unfair dumping policies.

HOFF: Hmm. And finally, if you could add a point to this article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

CHAO SMITH: If you could find a cohort to address these issues in whatever way makes sense for you and in whatever way lights you up, it can be totally energizing to combine skills and visions, especially working in interdisciplinary teams. And the act of forming these connections and taking the action you want actually changes and shifts the inequity in itself. [theme music returns]

HOFF: Megan Chao Smith, thank you so much for your time on the podcast and for your and Dr Demorest's contribution to the Journal this month.

CHAO SMITH: Thanks, Tim.

HOFF: To read the full article, as well as the rest of the October 2022 issue for free, visit our site, [JournalofEthics.org](https://www.journalofethics.org). We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.