

***Mary Alice Fisher, Ph.D., Executive Director, The Center for Ethical Practice:***

Mary Alice Fisher is founding director of The Center for Ethical Practice. She is licensed as a Clinical Psychologist in Virginia and is a member of the adjunct faculty of the University of Virginia Curry Programs in Clinical and School Psychology, where she previously taught a course in Professional Ethics and conducted treatment teams for clinical graduate students. Currently, she provides training and consultation to students and faculty.

For the past 25 years, she has been conducting continuing education workshops and providing consultation for mental health service providers of all professions on ethical issues and ethical-legal conflicts in clinical practice. Until 2019 she also provided psychotherapy to adult clients in a private clinical practice in Charlottesville, Virginia.

For her work with Virginia clinicians, Dr. Fisher received an award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to the Practice of Clinical Psychology from the Virginia Academy of Clinical Psychologists. In 2015 she was the first-ever recipient of the [“Outstanding Alumni Human Services Practitioner Award”](#) from the University of Virginia Curry School of Education Foundation. In 2016, the American Psychological Association recognized her accomplishments with the award for “Outstanding Contributions to Ethics Education.”

She has specialized in confidentiality ethics, with a focus on the ethical complications of “conditional” confidentiality, the only level of confidentiality that mental health clinicians are now legally free to offer. Her Ethical Practice Model for ensuring the protection of clients’ confidentiality rights provided a fresh perspective on this complicated topic. The model was first introduced as the lead article in in the January 2008 issue of the APA flagship journal, *American Psychologist* (Vol. 63, No. 1, pp. 1–13), [“Protecting Confidentiality Rights: The Need for an Ethical Practice Model.”](#) At the August, 2009, American Psychological Association (APA) National Convention in Boston, she presented a continuing education workshop, “Can You Keep A Secret?” based on that article. [See on this website both an [HTML version of that article](#) and an outline of the [Confidentiality Practice Model](#) on which it is based.] In 2018 she was invited by APA to conduct a webinar based on that model for the Clinician’s Corner series and was invited to conduct a similar webinar for NASP (National Association of School Psychologists.)

Dr. Fisher was invited to write the chapter, “Confidentiality and Record Keeping,” for the 2012 first edition of the [APA Handbook of Ethics in Psychology](#). In 2013, Oxford University Press published her book about therapeutic confidentiality: [The Ethics of Conditional Confidentiality: A Practice Model for Mental Health Professionals](#). Her second book on that topic was published in 2016 by the American Psychological Association Press with the title [Confidentiality Limits in Psychotherapy: ✓ Ethics Checklists for Mental Health Professionals](#).

Articles by Dr. Fisher, available in HTML on the Center’s website, include [“Replacing ‘Who is the Client’ With a Different Ethical Question”](#) (*Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, January 2009, Vol 40, No. 1, pp. 1-7); and [“Ethics-Based Training for Non-Clinical Staff in Mental Health Settings”](#) (*Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, October 2009, Vol. 40, No. 5, pp. 459-466). In 2014, she wrote the article, [“Why ‘Who is the Client?’ Is The Wrong Ethical Question”](#) in the *Journal of Applied School Psychology*. 30 (3):183-208.