

Ethics Consultation Service (ECS)

ECS are services that aim to help patients, families, staff, leaders, and other stakeholders resolve ethical concerns at Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH). All health care organizations should support and ensure timely access to ECS. This recommendation aligns with Accreditation Canada requirements. The goal of ECS is to improve health-care quality by facilitating the resolution of ethical concerns in clinical and non-clinical areas.

An ethics consultation can be requested by anyone at CMH (staff, patients, families, etc.), at any time, and for any reason. All formal ethics consultations will be provided by a qualified external Ethicist from Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences.

For more information, or to request an ethics consultation, please contact our Ethicist:

ethics@cmh.ca.

Organizational Ethics Support

Effective mechanisms for addressing ethical concerns at the organizational level depend on leadership support, expertise, time, resources and formal policies. At this level, the Ethicist may provide the following support:

1. In the development or revision of ethics-related policies;
2. On how ethics consultations should be documented, tracked or made available for educational purposes at CMH;
3. To revise, develop, implement and make the ethics framework known;
4. To revise or develop an organizational approach to ethical decision-making that is proactive, that can be responsive, and that meets standards of access and accountability;
5. In refining the Mission, Vision, and Values CMH.

Education and Capacity Building

The CMH Ethicist helps to coordinate and provide ethics education throughout CMH in the form of unit-based rounds, in-service workshops, and formal hospital-wide presentations. Many of these educational activities are done in collaboration with other departments and hospital services.

Please contact the Ethicist to provide education for your group/team: ethics@cmh.ca.

Accreditation Support

Expertise and support in meeting Accreditation Canada's ethics-related standards must be provided across the organization. The Ethicist works with many stakeholders, from patients and families, to staff, leaders, and the Board to develop and implement the ethics framework so that it can be used as a valuable tool in decision making at all levels of the organization.

IDEA Decision-Making Framework Tool for Clinical Ethical Issues¹

Thinking about ethics is an integral part of service delivery for all involved in health care, from the bedside, to the boardroom. Ethics is about making 'right' or 'good' choices, and providing reasons for those choices. Unfortunately, which options are 'right' or 'good,' can often be unclear. It is for this reason that the IDEA Framework tool was developed. This tool provides a fair, step-by-step process to assist in the navigation and resolution of complex ethical issues that arise in the delivery of health care.

The IDEA Decision-Making Framework

1. IDENTIFY the facts
2. DETERMINE ethical principles in conflict
3. EXPLORE the options
4. ACT and evaluate

<u>Step 1: Identify the Facts</u> Identify what is known versus what is not known. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical Indications• Patient Preferences• Quality of Life, and• Contextual Features, Users of the framework should take into account all of the relevant considerations and stakeholders; this often includes facts that may not be known initially.	<u>Step 2: Determine Ethical Principles in Conflict</u> Identifying the ethical principles in conflict will not provide solutions; however, this step will assist in further clarifying and articulating the issues. Common ethical principles to consider might include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Autonomy• Beneficence (or doing good)• Non-maleficence (or doing no harm) or• Justice
<u>Step 3: Explore Options</u> The intent of this section is to brainstorm different alternatives and to consider the potential outcomes and impacts of each one (e.g., evaluate the potential positive and negative considerations of each option). Do the options fit with the patient's preferences? Do the options comply with corporate policy, regulations, and the law?	<u>Step 4: Act and Evaluate</u> Develop and document the action plan in the patient's chart. Evaluate the plan. Were the intended results obtained, or is additional follow-up and/ or action required? Ongoing documentation and communication of the evaluation is necessary. Self-evaluate your decision. What have you learned?

Please contact the CMH Ethicist if you would like assistance using this tool, or if you have an ethical issue or concern: ethics@cmh.ca

¹ (Modified from TORONTO CENTRAL COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRE (COMMUNITY ETHICS NETWORK), JULY 2008 document entitled, "Ethical Decision-Making in the Community Health and Support Sector, Community Ethics Toolkit")