



## Ethical Decision Making Framework

This worksheet is designed as a tool to guide you through the process in dealing with an ethical issue.

**I - D - E - A**

**I**nformation gathering  
**D**escribe situation  
**E**xplore options  
**A**ct on your decision & evaluate

### STEP 1: **I**NFORMATION GATHERING & **D**ESCRIBE SITUATION

**A) Gather information/facts on the case**

- Consider**
- Re-state the details of the case
  - What are the main issues or areas of concern/tension?
  - Who are the individuals involved/who else needs to be involved?
  - How does the client's history/prognosis affect this case?
  - Are there other factors to consider including policies, directive and regulations?

**B) Describe the different emotions**

- Consider**  
The emotions of:  
1) the client 2) family/others and 3) you  
**Examine the emotional factors influencing each individual: existing feelings, loyalties, values, biases, prior experience.**  
**Ask Yourself:**
- How do I feel about this particular client/family?
  - How are my life experiences influencing my reaction?
  - What are the family/cultural/societal traditions and customs that are influencing my reaction?

**STEP 1: *cont'd***

**C) Identify ethical issues (i.e. what ethical principles are in conflict?)**

**Consider:**

What ethical principles are involved?

- Our Values
- Dignity
- Informed Choice & Empowerment
- Commitment to Quality Services
- Fair & Equitable Access
- Health & Well Being-Client Confidentiality
- Conflict of Interest
- Advocacy
- Relationship Among Community Organizations
- Safety

**Refer to: LDHC Code of Ethics.**

**STEP 2: EXPLORE OPTIONS & ANALYZE**

**D) Explore options and consider their strengths and weaknesses**

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses

**Consider:**

Brainstorm & discuss options either alone or with peers. Remember to:

- Be creative and use your imagination
- Consider a compromise
- Predict the outcomes for each alternative
- Question whether the alternative meets the hospitals policies, directives and regulations

**Seek help if necessary and consult with the manager/supervisor you report to.**

## STEP 3: ACT ON YOUR DECISION & EVALUATE

### E) Develop an action plan.

Note: The actual plan shall be documented in the chart.

**Principle**

**Explain the Issue**

Principle	Explain the Issue

Consider:

- Given all the information that you have chosen the best option available
- Develop an action plan
- Present your suggested alternative and action plan to the client and those involved in such a way that it allows them to accept the plan
- Re-examine the alternatives if other factors come to light, if the situation changes, or if an agreement cannot be reached
- Determine when to evaluate the plan
- Document and communicate the plan

### F) Evaluate the plan

Consider:

- What was the outcome of the plan?
- Are changes necessary?
- Document the evaluation

### G) Self-evaluate our decision

Consider

- How do you feel about the decision and the outcome?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What would you do the same?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- What have you learned about the decision-making process?