



MANUAL: ADMINISTRATION

TITLE: ETHICS PROGRAM

**The Ethics Program is a culture and a process of learning by doing
of good and bad conduct.**

Sometimes, the ethical view is described as the view "all things considered"

PURPOSE

Lady Dunn Health Centre (LDHC) places a high value on all people's rights, and believes strongly in delivering ethical care and service. The Ethics Program addresses changing needs of the healthcare environment that requires a dynamic approach to program development and implementation.

The Ethics Program is designed to enhance understanding of ethical issues and to promote optimum ethical practices throughout the organization. The LDHC prepares and responds to this process by providing support for ethical decision-making at all levels of the organization. The Ethics Program is intended to help us put our values into practice and to improve how we deal with ethical situations in the organization.

It is intended to reflect and preserve the highest ethical standards of patient care, clinical and organizational ethics practice.

In order to meet the needs of the healthcare system and the communities we serve, the Ethics Program is designed to address ethical issues related to clinical and organizational decision-making.

STRUCTURE

Code of Ethics: The Code of Ethics will provide guidance to health care professionals with respect to organizational values and the promotion of ethical considerations in decision making.

Ethics Education: To create sensitivity to ethical issues and awareness of policies and processes for knowledge and skill development.

Ethics Framework: To ensure health care professionals are provided with a tool designed to guide and give direction in identifying and resolving ethical situations.

Case Consultation: To ensure the organization has a process in place which responds to requests for help to resolve ethical conflicts, regarding clinical and organizational issues.

Case Review: To ensure the organization has a process in place to review troubling cases retrospectively and also the means of learning from experience.

Policy Review: To ensure the organization articulates ethical commitment and values to make certain that policies guide practice in areas of ethical concerns.

Evaluation: Gather data to measure the Ethics Program based on good motives, following the rules and leading to a good outcome.

LEADERSHIP

Readership of this Ethics Program applies to all governing board members, administrators, healthcare professionals, employees, contractors, auxiliary, volunteers, students and anyone else who acts on behalf of the Lady Dunn Health Centre.

Mission

To provide our communities with high quality health services.

Vision

Excellent health care for every one, every day.

Core Value Statements

Preamble: Values are the standards that influence every aspect of our lives and provide direction to decisions made by our organization.

- Trust: We value reliability, dependability and are accountable for our actions.
- Respect: We value the dignity and uniqueness of every individual. We demonstrate fairness and consistency in our interactions.
- Integrity: We value professional and ethical conduct. Honest and openness are the hallmarks of the way we conduct our business.
- Compassion: We respond to needs of others with empathy and concern.
- Inclusiveness: We value people with diverse backgrounds, cultures, skills, beliefs and attitudes.

Definitions

Ethics: There is no simple, uncontested definition of ethics. Ethics, refers to human conduct that is good and bad, and right and wrong; Ethics refers to what ought to be done (or not done) all things considered. Put simply: Ethics concerns values.

For the purpose of the Ethics Program: Accreditation's Program— 5th Edition standard glossary defines ethics as; Standards of conduct that are morally correct.

Clinical and Organizational Ethics: Ethical issues arise in the healthcare setting from the bedside to the boardroom. Bedside issues or "clinical ethics" can involve decisions to offer or forgo treatments, clashes of patient's and caregiver's values and issues of rights and autonomy. But ethical issues also arise around resource allocation – the decision as to whom gets what, and who doesn't is a values based decision and this needs ethical reflection. Similarly ethical issues, for instance around conflict of interest, arise because healthcare organizations are organizations and businesses and with all the likes personal and inter-organizational issues that entail.

Accreditation Standards

Ethics is a high priority criteria identified in the Accreditation Standards. The purpose of the ethics accreditation standards are to ensure the organization are doing the right thing to achieve the best possible results and putting clients and families first. The Ethics Standards are an essential practice to achieve and enhance client safety, employee safety, quality improvement while minimizing risk.

Orientation and Use

Governing boards members, administrators, healthcare professionals, employees, contractors, students, volunteers and anyone else who acts on behalf of the Lady Dunn Health Centre must maintain familiarity with and abide by the Ethics Program. However, this program is not intended to restrict initiative or judgment required to provide appropriate and effective care and service. The Ethics Program is intended to provide a framework for effective performance.

Distribution

The Ethics Program will be distributed to each Board Member and Manager of the Lady Dunn Health Centre. Managers are to ensure the program is readily available to employees within the department.

Name: ETHICS PROGRAM	Category: Categories/Policy Manual/Administrative Services/Administration
SigningAuthority: Board Chair	LastReviewedDate: 10/02/2017 12:00:00
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Contributions:

Members of Leadership and Partnerships, Management, Dr. Robert Butcher and colleagues diligently reviewed and provided their feedback for the Ethics Program.

Permission to Use

An adaptation with permissions "Model Organizational Code of Conduct" from *An Introduction to Healthcare Organizational Ethics, Robert T. Hall.*

Code of Ethics

In fulfillment of the Lady Dunn Health Centre's goals incorporated in our Mission Statement and in consideration of the many groups and individuals that have a stake in our organizational activities, the following code of ethics is established as the norm of this organization.

Governing board members, administrators, healthcare professionals, employees, auxiliary, volunteers, students and anyone else who acts on behalf of the Lady Dunn Health Centre shall:

- Observe strict conformity with all federal, provincial and local laws, report violations to the Chief Executive Officer and request clarification of activities that appear to be out of compliance.
- Avoid all conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest in conducting organizational business including strict adherence to organizational rules on gifts and gratuities and on the full disclosure of financial interests.
- Use only accepted principles and methods of costs reporting and auditing in all financial matters and remain open and fair in resolving disputes.
- Protect organizational assets from misuse, misappropriation or waste and refrain from using one's organizational position for personal gain.
- Provide all medically appropriate health care services insuring that no one in need of care to stabilize his or her medical condition will be turned away and that no one will be discharged without a plan that will safeguard his or her welfare.
- Provide health services in accordance with medical ethics standards and with patient self-determination as stated in the Patients' Bill of Rights giving special care to the interests of patients who are in vulnerable conditions or who are participating in medical research.
- Be sensitive to the social, cultural and religious needs of patients and their families, giving special care in respect to requests for organ donation.
- Maintain the confidentiality of patient information and proprietary information of the organization.
- Be honest and fair in marketing and promotional presentations and in media relations.
- Conduct governmental relations and personal political activities in such a way as to reflect the missions, vision and ethical principles of the organization.
- Adhere to the standards of one's own profession.

"By permission of Oxford University Press, Inc.". pp. 250-252, Model Organizational Code of Conduct- Appendix 4 from "Introduction to Healthcare Organizational Ethics" by Hall, R.T. (2000)

EDUCATION

The purpose of ethics education in the workplace is to raise sensitivity to ethical issues and help caregivers develop the tools required to solve ethical problems as they arise.

Foundations Consultants on Values and Ethics (Foundations Consultants) will provide this service for the Lady Dunn Health Centre. It is anticipated that the consultant will be on-site once per year to deliver ethics education.

Foundations Consultants will provide:

Education: Education may address many ethical issues faced by caregivers. These would be general information sessions that would introduce ethics, ethics services, and situate both in the context of a rural community hospital. The in-service would be based on the best-practice model and the issues for the hospital as identified in the areas of gathering data and policy and practice development.

Ethics in governance workshop to Board of Directors. This workshop would identify the ethical issues of particular relevance to governance.

General staff consultation: The ethicist is available for individual consultation with employees.

Meetings with patient care teams: The ethicist is available to meet with patient care teams regarding patient care and treatment decisions. The ethicist is available to join this group as needed to support employees and physician with their ethical decision-making.

Regular on-site visits: The visits would allow the ethicist to meet with employees on a non-crisis basis to discuss on-going issues, conduct mini-training sessions and to look for ways to avoid problems before they occur.

FRAMEWORK

Considerations of ethical issues are an essential component of providing client care and services within the Lady Dunn Health Centre. Health care providers encounter ethical conflict, uncertainty or distress in their everyday practice. Continuous changes in the health care system, in areas such as technology, and changes in values contribute to the ethical

dilemmas. Understanding and communication of beliefs and values help these professionals to prevent ethical conflicts and to work through them when they do occur. **APPENDIX A**

Making Decisions

Making good ethical decisions requires trained sensitivity to ethical issues and a practiced method for exploring the ethical aspects of a decision and weighing the considerations that should impact our choice of a course of action. Having a method for ethical decision making is absolutely essential. When practiced regularly, the method becomes so familiar that we work through it automatically without consulting the specific steps.

The *Ethical Decision Making Framework* is a tool designed to guide health care professionals with direction in identifying ethical courses of action.

The ethical framework is designed to provide our healthcare professionals with direction in identifying and resolving ethical situations. Because not all will be able to address every situation that arises alone, they will need other resources. The more novel and difficult the ethical choice we face, the more we need to rely on discussion and dialogue with others about the dilemma. Only by careful exploration of the problem, aided by the insights and different perspectives of others, can we make good ethical choices in situations.

CASE CONSULTATION

Ethics Consultation: An Ethics Consultation is a process by which an ethicist responds to requests for help to resolve ethical conflicts, regarding clinical and organizational issues.

The ethicist role is presented in an advisory capacity. Any decisions made are not ultimately the responsibility of an ethicist. Patients/clients and their relatives, administrators, directors, health care professionals and other employees remain responsible for their own decision.

Ethics Consultation Service: Foundations Consultants will provide the service.

Foundations Consultants is primarily intended as a resource when patients/clients and their relatives, administrators, directors, health professionals and other employees may feel that they have reached the limits of their own personal or professional ability to address ethical questions. The Lady Dunn Health Centre offers this advisory service on a 24 hour, 365 day on-call telephone basis. The ethicist will provide information, advice or referrals as required.

How is an Ethics Consultation Requested?

First talk to your manager. If you are unable to resolve the problem or need further assistance, you may request an ethics consultation. Healthcare professionals, directors and other employees may request a case consultation or review through the designated liaison: Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Coordinator, extension 3219. Your request will be treated with respect and confidentiality. You will be asked to describe the case/issue/situation to determine if an ethics consultation is an appropriate response. If a consultation is appropriate, a time and place will be organized as soon as possible, according to the urgency of the situation.

Ethics consultation and advice can help physicians and caregivers make better decisions when they are faced with difficult choices for patient care.

Ethics consultant supports and empowers staff that is frequently called upon to make ethical choices for which they feel ill-prepared and trained. Ethics services improve patient care by providing an external values-based perspective, which, by its nature, looks at issues from all sides.

Policy development, including policy regarding the allocation of scarce resources, that explicitly includes ethical analysis results in stronger policy.

CASE REVIEW

Provides a feedback mechanism for identifying and dealing with systemic issues, and is a means of learning from experience. Providing support for staff as they share the burden that can arise through the provision of health care. Case review can occur on the unit where the incident occurred or in a general session where the hospital community can come together, reflect and learn from difficult ethical issues.

POLICY REVIEW

To ensure the organization articulates ethical commitment in a proactive manner, the ethicist would review recommendations and hospital policies to ensure that it has an ethical component. These policies could concern patient care, DNR orders and futility, pharmacy policies, resource allocation, research and so on.

EVALUATION

Evaluating an Ethics Program has always been recognized as a good practice, "periodic program evaluation" is a minimum requirement for an effective Ethics Program.

To demonstrate the ongoing benefits of the Ethics Program to the rest of the organization, team members measure the effectiveness of their process using both qualitative and quantitative measures.

Qualitative information includes anecdotal evidence of change in practice, a positive impact on moral or personal experience.

Quantitative information may include the number of referrals made to the ethicist, the number of cases processed, the number of employees attending education sessions and the number of policies or guidelines that are revised or developed.

The essential goal of an Ethics Program is to help the governing body, managers, employees, and clients work together to pursue the purpose of an organization; to achieve its more specific goals and objectives in a manner consistent with its standards for clinical and organizational wide ethical conduct.

Resource:

A Handbook of Health Ethics – copies available at the nursing station, the CQI Coordinator and Resource Centre.

This “user-friendly” resource is a solid reference handbook concerning a multitude of ethical concepts and common ethical issues faced by healthcare providers who wish to affirm the personal centered approach to the provision of care. Ethical approaches are suggested regarding the resolution of ethical dilemmas in various contexts. Also covered are other issues of ethical importance such as the ethical allocation of resources, and emerging issues and trends.