

THE RELIGIOUS HOSPITALLERS OF ST. JOSEPH
OF THE HOTEL DIEU OF ST. CATHARINES

Subject: ETHICS CONSULTATION	
Issuing Area: Ethics	Section: Patient Care
Application: All Staff	Policy No.: I-270
Approval Authority: Senior Management Committee	
Effective Date: October 2007	Page No.: 1 of 3
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1.0 BACKGROUND

Due to advances in technology, health care professionals, administration, patients, and families can become involved in ethically challenging situations. These complex situations may be confusing for patients and families, and call for extensive discussion of options, as well as an overview of how others have resolved similar ethical dilemmas.

The best initial approach to an ethical conflict is a discussion that may include patients, family members, chaplains, nurses, physicians and other health care professionals. These discussions can be organized as a conference referred to as an *ethics consultation*.

2.0 PURPOSE STATEMENT

In keeping with the mission and values of Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre (HDSHRC) this policy is to provide guidance and to establish a process for resolving an ethical conflict (values conflict), usually in the realm of treatment decisions and the best interest of the person/patient. These conflicts may arise when the patient's best interests conflicts with the families wishes; when treatment options pose conflicts among the patient/family or the health care team or in other circumstances; when issues arise where values are in conflict.

3.0 POLICY

Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre provides an interdisciplinary forum for the resolution of ethical dilemmas through an ethics consultation process. It is the policy of the hospital that:

1. The Philosophy and Mission of the hospital along with the values and principles inherent in the Health Ethics Guide (Catholic Health Association of Canada, 2000) should form the basis for all medical practice and health care delivery within the institution.

2. The Mission, Ethics and Quality of Care Committee is responsible for establishing policies to promote and assess bioethical education and practices within the hospital.
3. The Mission, Ethics and Quality of Care Committee is responsible for providing consultative services to assist in resolving ethical concerns either of a general nature or related to specific patient care issues.

4.0 **PROCEDURE**

1. When there is a concern with respect to ethical and moral implications, an Ethics Consultation may be requested by any member of the healthcare team, administration, the patient and/or family.
2. A request is made to the Department Manager for an ethics consultation. There will be contact between the Department Manager and the Chairperson or designate of Mission, Ethics and Quality of Care Committee to organize the ethics consultation. The consultation will be scheduled at a date and time convenient to all participants.
3. The Ethics Consultation is usually facilitated by the Chairperson or designate of Mission, Ethics and Quality of Care Committee. The Ethics Consultation team is usually comprised of the Executive of the Mission, Ethics & Quality of Care Committee and other members as noted:
 - Chairperson of the Mission, Ethics & Quality of Care Committee
 - A physician from the Mission, Ethics & Quality of Care Committee
 - The CEO or designate
 - One RHSJ or designate
 - The CNO or designate
 - Ad Hoc Member(s) as appropriate
4. The conference is envisioned as a process of dialogue among the participants as identified in *Appendix I* of this policy: *Design for the Ethical Consultation Process*. The Design for the Ethical Consultation Process gives the areas to be covered and the manner in which the consultation proceeds. This meeting is a cordial meeting among the concerned parties to proceed through an ethical decision making process and amicably resolve the identified situation.
5. A summary of the Ethical Consultation is documented on the *Ethical Consultation Summary* form identified as *Appendix II* in this policy which is then filed in Administration.
6. Chart Documentation is noted in the Interdisciplinary Progress Note of the Health Record. The note is a summary note which contains the following details:
 - a. the issue
 - b. the resolution

- c. statement of the interdisciplinary approach

This note is intended to be brief.

7. All subsequent meetings require completion of the Ethical Consultation Summary form to document follow-up meetings and are likewise filed in Administration.
8. Confidentiality and Privacy of Information must be maintained at all times during the consultation process.

5.0 REFERENCES

Health Ethics Guide (Catholic Health Association of Canada)

6.0 DISTRIBUTION

Corporate Manual
Clinical Manual

Appendix I: *Design for the Ethical Consultation Process*

Appendix II: *Ethics Consultation Summary*

DEFINITION: Ethics, when considered in the health care context, is the discipline that seeks to answer the question: "What is good and right for us as individuals and as members of the human community?" Ethics helps us understand how human beings ought to relate to self, others, and God in order to be fulfilled as human beings.

DESIGN FOR THE ETHICAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

The following outline provides a framework for the consultation process.

1. Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Purpose of request▪ Person requesting consultation presents concern and gives brief overview of the process (Clarify problem, seek consensus, counsel in the decision process for the decision-maker)
2. Definition of problem <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Overview of case history▪ Person(s) requesting<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Introduction of Case Consultation<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Circumstances surrounding caseb. Ethical Challenge (could be one of the following but is not limited to)<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Lack of informationii. Lines of communication not cleariii. Clarify role of substitute decision makeriv. Patient's expressed wishes conflict with family wishes
3. Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Impressions, reactions, concerns, conflicts: Family context; belief structure, evolution of problem, value dilemmas, legal implications
4. Summary of discussion content
5. Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Re-examination of options▪ Include a Statement of Resolution▪ Opinions/alternatives▪ Exploration of outcomes
6. Follow-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Designate Most Responsible Person as appropriate

Ethics Consultation Facilitator will be responsible to provide a written summary of the consultation for filing in the designated office.

APPENDIX II

Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre

ETHICS CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Date: _____ Time: _____ Place: _____	
Participants: _____ _____ _____	
Summary	
Purpose of Consultation: 	
Ethical Dilemma: 	
History of the Current Situation: 	
Alternatives / Options: 	
Resolutions / Recommendations 	
Resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Not resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Date _____	Recorder: _____