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*Approved by Senior Management Group Health PEI March 14, 2017*

*Adapted with permission from the Alberta Health Services Ethics Framework*
Introduction

Building a Culture of Ethics

Health PEI is committed to the highest degree of ethical and professional conduct in its provision of services. Our organization supports a culture of ethics, where the values of the organization are embedded and are reflected in decision making at all levels. The Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee (C&O Ethics Committee) and the PEI Research Ethics Board (REB) provide forums, support and direction for addressing ethical dilemmas of a clinical, organizational and research nature.

The Health PEI C&O Ethics Committee and the PEI REB provide education on ethics to Health PEI staff and physicians. Both these Committees are an integral part of the Quality Framework of Health PEI. These committees are a resource to patients, families, staff and physicians who have questions about ethics. The term patient is used throughout this document and refers to patients, clients and residents accessing the services of Health PEI.

The Health PEI Ethics Framework provides an overview of the resources available to support ethical values and decision making and to support and enhance an ethical culture.

Feedback

The Health PEI Ethics Framework is a living document and will grow as the organization continues to strive for excellence. We appreciate feedback and suggestions which can be sent to Rick Adams, Executive Director Quality and Patient Safety radams@ihis.org.
Ethics Resources

Health PEI Values

Our Values

Core values are integral to our activities and relationships as health care professionals and providers at Health PEI.

**CARING**

We treat everyone with compassion, respect, fairness and dignity.

**INTEGRITY**

We collaborate in an environment of trust, communicate with openness and honesty, and are accountable through responsible decision making.

**EXCELLENCE**

We pursue continuous quality improvement through innovation, integration, and the adoption of evidence based practices.

Resources:


Ethics Support Decision Tree

In an effort to provide guidance and clarity in determining the resource most appropriate for your ethical question, a decision tree is provided on Page 6  Figure 1. The algorithm has guiding questions to provide direction to the most appropriate resource and the contact information for the lead of each resource.
Figure 1. Ethics Support Decision Tree

Do You Have an Ethics Question?

- Are you wondering “What is the right thing to do?”
- Are the differences expressed using words such as “fairness” or “respect”?
- Do you feel caught between 2 or more obligations such as promoting well being and respecting choice?
- Do multiple options seem right or wrong?
- Is there no clear policy, law or standard giving direction?
- Would you describe yourself and others as feeling moral distress over an issue?

- Is the question mainly about patient care?
- Is the situation in a clinical setting?

- Does the question involve policy or an organizational process?
- Does the situation impact many individuals or facilities?

- Is the question about research or evaluation?

- Are you considering disclosing a wrongdoing as a ‘whistleblower’?


Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee: [clincialethics@ihis.org](mailto:clincialethics@ihis.org)

Contact the PEI Research Ethics Board: [reb@ihis.org](mailto:reb@ihis.org) or (902) 569-0576

Contact the Ethics and Integrity Commissioner (902) 368-4207
Clinical and Organizational Ethics

Health care treatment options are often complex and difficult. Frequently there are many answers and none are a clear choice to the health care provider, management, administration, the patient or their family. When this happens there is usually moral distress for those involved. The ethics committee provides a process and guidance in making these decisions (See Figure 2). The responsibilities of the Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee include:

- Responding to consult requests that may be clinical, such as treatment options and end of life decisions, or organizational such as policy or resource allocation.
- Responding to consult requests that may be brought forward to this multi-disciplinary committee from management, staff, physicians, patients, or family.
- Acting in an advisory capacity making recommendations in response to an ethics consult request.
- Providing and facilitating education on ethics to Health PEI staff.
- Contributing to the Quality Framework of Health PEI.
- Maintaining the Ethical Decision making toolkit on the Health PEI Staff Resource Centre: [www.healthpei.ca/src/toolkits#Clinical_Ethics_Toolkit](http://www.healthpei.ca/src/toolkits#Clinical_Ethics_Toolkit)

**Further Information:** The Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee may be contacted at [clinicalethics@ihis.org](mailto:clinicalethics@ihis.org).
Figure 2. Ethical Decision Making Algorithm

Ethical Dilemma Identified

Staff use the Ethical Decision Making Worksheet at work site

Resolution obtained

Document resolution on patient/client/resident chart or for non-clinical, file appropriately

If unable to resolve then request a consult from the Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee conducts a consult and provides a response with recommendations
PEI Research Ethics Board

The Prince Edward Island Research Ethics Board’s (REB) mandate includes the review of the ethical acceptability of all research involving humans conducted within Health PEI’s jurisdiction. This includes research involving human participants, biological materials, human embryos, fetuses, fetal tissue, reproductive materials and stem cells. This applies to materials derived from living and deceased individuals. The REB evaluates research protocols with reference to scientific validity, informed consent, harm/benefit ratios, participant selection procedures, privacy issues, researchers’ qualifications and adherence to accepted guidelines and legislation.

The REB is independent in its decision making and has the authority to approve, reject, propose modifications, suspend or terminate any proposed or ongoing research involving human participants.

Further Information: Contact the Research Ethics Board Coordinator at reb@ihis.org, the website www.healthpei.ca/reb or call (902) 569-0576.

Ethics and Compliance

Health PEI provides and encourages an ethical culture in the workplace. This is supported through:

- The Public Interest and Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection policy (October 13, 2015). This policy enhances accountability and promotes ethical conduct within government by providing employees with a path for the disclosure of wrongdoing, as well as protection in the event of employment-related reprisal caused by the good faith reporting of wrongdoing.

- Health PEI Code of Conduct (January 2014) articulates how all Health PEI employees are to live the organization’s values: Caring, Integrity and Excellence. It promotes a civil, safe and productive workplace by clarifying what it means to live Health PEI’s values.
  Further Information: Contact your manager/director. The brochure can be found at: http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/src_coc_booklet.pdf.

- Employee Conflict of Interest Policy (April 2008) provides a guideline for how employees are to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of integrity and avoid conflicts of interest. The policy provides a process to address perceived or actual conflict of interest.
  Further Information: Contact your manager/director or Human Resources. Policy can be found: http://iis.peigov/dept/health/manual/pdf/HR%20Employee%20Conflict%20of%20Interest_1.pdf.

- Professional Codes of Conduct provide guidance to staff in regard to their professional ethics.
Ethics Decision Making

Ethical Decision Making Process

The guidelines for staff and physicians to work through an ethical dilemma are found in the Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethical Decision Making Guidelines


The poster on the following page is a tool which is available in the meeting rooms and clinical areas of Health PEI. It is also available for printing by contacting the Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee at clinicalethics@ihis.org. This poster provides the process, questions and considerations for working through an ethical dilemma.
Ethical Decision Making Poster
References:


Strategic Plan:  www.healthpei.ca/strategicplan

Ethical Decision making toolkit:  www.healthpei.ca/src/toolkits#Clinical_Ethics_Toolkit

Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee: clinicaledics@ihis.org

Research Ethics Board Coordinator:  reb@ihis.org, the website www.healthpei.ca/reb or call 902.569.0576


Province of Prince Edward Island Ethics and Integrity Commissioner: Shauna Sullivan Curley (902) 368-4207

