

Ethics Framework for Health PEI



March 14, 2017

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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:

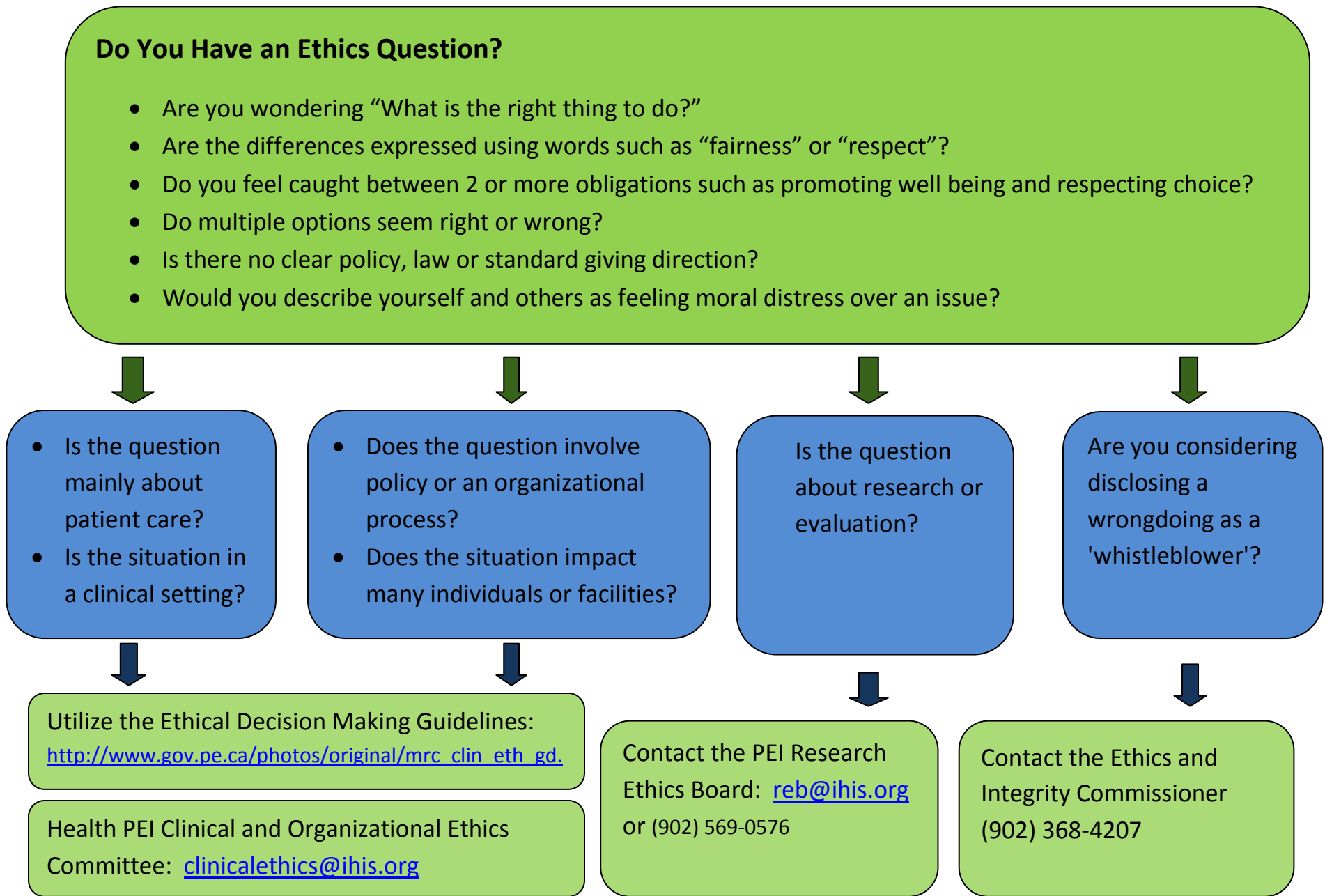
Vision, Values and Goals [www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/health_pei_strategic_plan_2017-2020 - executive summary.pdf](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/health_pei_strategic_plan_2017-2020_-_executive_summary.pdf)

Strategic Plan <http://www.healthpei.ca/strategicplan>.

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



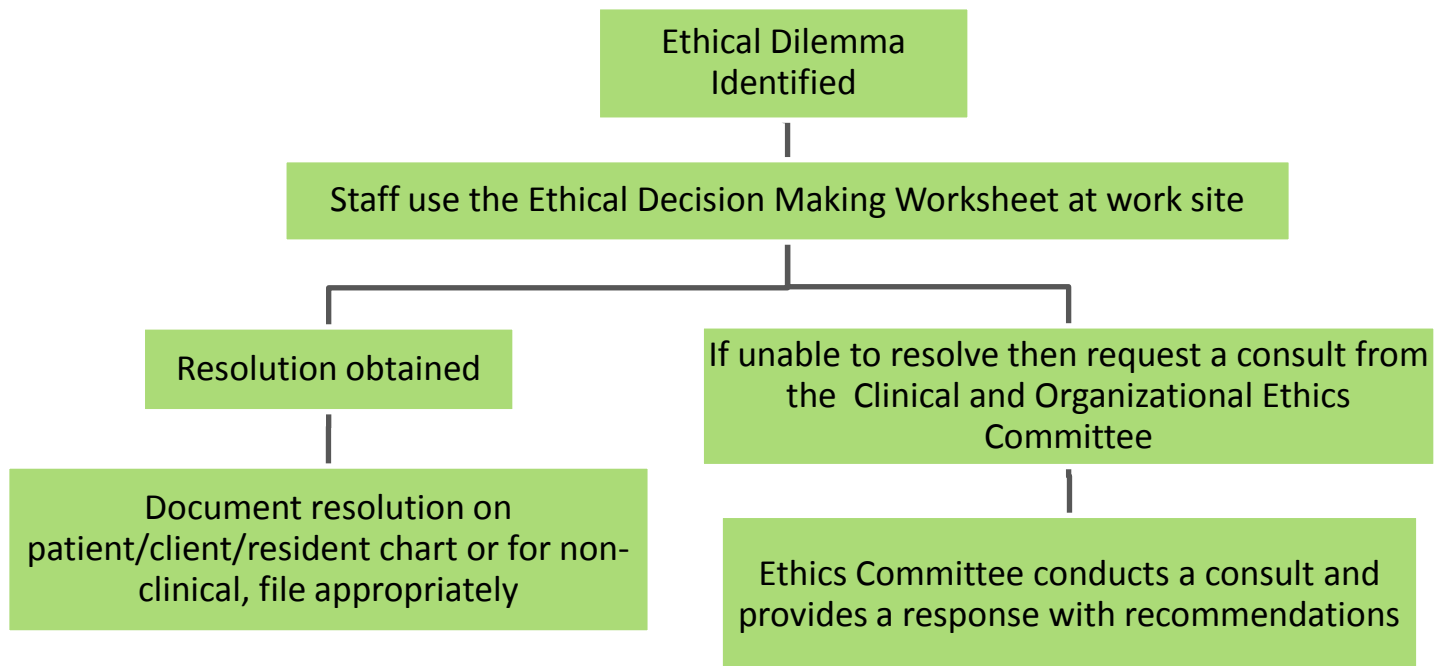
Clinical and Organizational Ethics

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
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Further Information: The Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee may be contacted at clinicaethics@ihis.org.

Figure 2. Ethical Decision Making Algorithm



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.
Further information: Contact the Ethics and Integrity Commissioner, Shauna Sullivan Curley at (902) 368-4207. The policy can be found at <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/publication/public-interest-disclosure-and-whistleblower-protection-policy>.
- **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

http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/mrc_clin_eth_gd.pdf.

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 clinicaethics@ihis.org. This poster provides the process, questions and considerations for working through an ethical dilemma.

Ethical Decision Making Poster

IS THAT ETHICAL?

Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee Ethical Decision Making Framework

Theories of Ethics

Utilitarianism: Considers an action to be right when it leads to the greatest good and the least amount of harm for the greatest number of people.

Deontology of duty: Considers that rules are established to determine what is right or wrong based on one's obligations and duties.

Ethic of Care: Realizing the importance of hearing another's story and being compassionate in making important life decisions.

Principles of Ethics

Autonomy: self-determination - Capable and competent individuals have the basic right to self-determination, independence and freedom, enabling them to make informed choices.

Non-maleficence: to do no harm - Obliges us to act in such a way that we prevent or remove harm from our clients and ourselves.

Beneficence: to do good - Requires that we perform acts that will benefit clients.

Justice/fairness, according to need: The obligation to be fair to all people, treating people according to their need. Can be further expanded to include distributive justice such as fair access to, and allocation of resources as well as procedural justice or shared decision-making. It involves including people in the decisions that affect them.

Other Ethical Considerations:

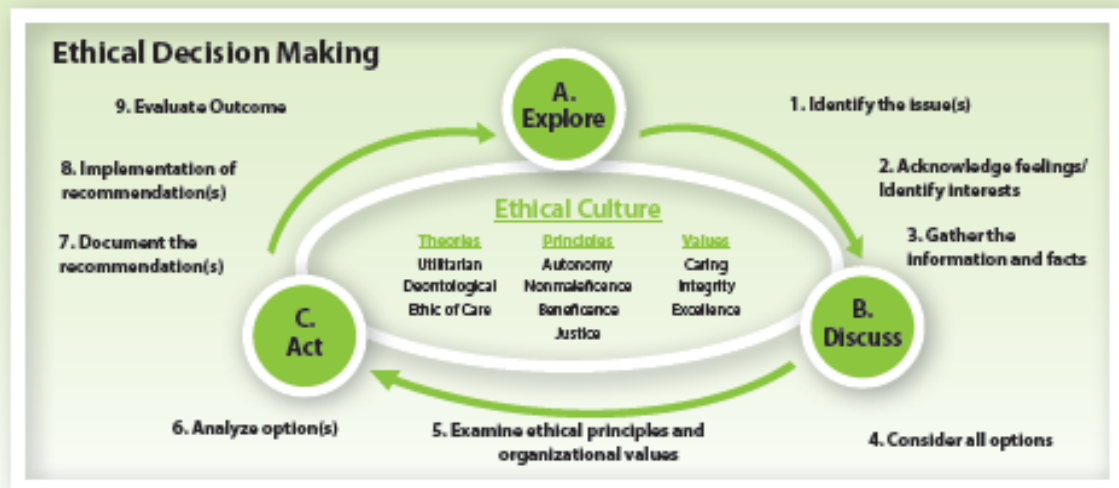
Quality of life: The ability to function physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially as perceived by the client and care providers.

Dignity: Considers the worth of the human person

Consent: The client freely authorizes and agrees to treatment.

Capacity (or competency): The client understands his/her condition/situation, options and appreciates the consequences of the various choices being considered.

Confidentiality: The obligation to hold in confidence the client's and organizational information which is shared in trust.



Clinical Application – Ethical Decision-Making Criteria

<p>Medical Indications Consider each medical condition and its proposed treatment.</p> <p>Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it fulfill the goals of care? What is the probability of success? 	<p>Patient/Client/Resident Preferences Address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the patient's wishes? Does the patient have the capacity to decide? Y/N If not, who is the substitute decision maker of the patient? Do the patient's wishes reflect a process that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed? Understood? Voluntary?
<p>Quality of Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the patient quality of life in his/her terms. What is the patient's expectation of the probable outcome? What are the views of the care providers about the quality of life? 	<p>Contextual Features Social, cultural, religious, legal, economic and institutional circumstances in the case that can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence the decision Be influenced by the decision e.g. inability to pay for treatment, inadequate social support, family dynamics

Non-Clinical Application – Ethical Decision-Making Criteria

<p>External Environment</p> <p>Political Economic Social Technological</p> <p>Consider each of these aspects as you identify the issue(s) and as you analyze the options.</p> <p>Governance Context How are the issues and analysis congruent and impacted by: the direction of Government, the strategic plan, laws, politics?</p>	<p>Service, Quality & Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the patient / organizational outcomes? Does it enhance or undermine quality and risk issues? Does this affect efficiency? Are we using resources properly?
<p>Stewardship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does this impact work life? Workload? Relationships? Communication? What is the overall wellness of the person? The system? Does this enhance retention? What are the financial implications? 	<p>Values and Ethics In what way(s) is this consistent with or compromise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization's values and goals? Ethical theories and principles? Personal integrity?

In Summary:

Will this decision meet a) the threshold of best care for the patient, and b) the publicity test - if we advertise the decision to the general public, would the decision be accepted or debated?

The patient's well-being must trump the interests and conflicting values of others.

To access the Guideline and Consent Forms, go to <http://www.healthpe.ca/ethics/> - click on "Tools" under "Templates, Guidelines and Tools". For more information, please contact the Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethics Committee at ethics@healthpe.ca

References:

Vision, Values and Goals: www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/health_pei_strategic_plan_2017-2020_-_executive_summary.pdf

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: clinicaethics@ihis.org

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

Public Interest and Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection Policy

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/publication/public-interest-disclosure-and-whistleblower-protection-policy>

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

Health PEI Code of Conduct brochure: http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/src_coc_booklet.pdf

Health PEI Conflict of Interest Policy:

http://iis.peigov/dept/health/manual/pdf/HR%20Employee%20Conflict%20of%20Interest_1.pdf

Health PEI Clinical and Organizational Ethical Decision Making Guidelines

http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/mrc_clin_eth_gd.pdf