

WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT THE ETHICS RESPONSE TEAM?

You may contact the Ethics Response Team to request any of the activities listed in the section “What is the Ethics Response Team role?” Anyone (hospital staff, physicians, students, volunteers, patients and family members) may request an ethics consultation.



An ethics consultation may be helpful if you are facing or have experienced any of the following situations and you are unsure of how to proceed:

Ethical Violation – when an action that appears to be unethical is being proposed or carried out.

Ethical Dilemma – when there are competing course of action both of which may be ethically defensible (e.g. conflicting values) and there is a difference of opinion on how to proceed.

“The first step in the evolution of Ethics is a sense of solidarity with other human beings.”

Albert Schweitzer

HOW DO I CONTACT THE ETHICS RESPONSE TEAM?

You can contact the Ethics Response Team by calling any of the following:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Patient Representative | 52317 |
| Social Work/Discharge Planning | 52520 |
| Spiritual Care Services | 52447 |



The Ethics Response Team consults with other individuals as necessary, such as Clinical Practice Managers, physicians, nurses, patients, appropriate family member(s) and/or the Patient’s appointed representative.



OUTSTANDING CARE – NO EXCEPTIONS!

1995 Lens Ave., Windsor, ON N8W 1L9 www.wrh.on.ca

ETHICS PROGRAM

Information for Staff, Physicians, Volunteers and Students



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WHAT IS ETHICS?

Ethics is about making right or good choices and the reasons that we give for our choices and actions. Ethics promotes reflective practice in the delivery of health care.

“Ethics can be described as a way of critically looking at issues in health care that encompass:

- **Deciding what we should do** – what decisions are morally right or acceptable based on the values and principles we agree are relevant;
- **Explaining why we should do it** – justifying our decision using language of values and principles to explain why; and
- **Describing how we should do it** – outlining an appropriate process of enacting the decision.”

Definition developed by Dr. Barbara Secker, University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics.

If you answer ‘yes’ to one or more of the following questions you may be facing an ethical issue:

- Am I trying to determine the right course of action?
- Am I asking a ‘should’ question?
- Are values and beliefs involved?
- Am I feeling uncomfortable?

Everyone has a role to play in ensuring the ethical delivery of care, from bedside to boardroom.

Ethical principles and values are incorporated into the way decisions are made and care is delivered every day.

Windsor Regional Hospital is committed to providing Outstanding Care – No Exceptions!

The Windsor Regional Hospital Ethics Program encompasses two committees:

Ethics Committee

The WRH Ethics Committee acts as an advisory Committee on matters related to hospital ethics and to promote awareness and education regarding ethical decision making. The Committee advises on policies and procedures with ethical implications for patient care within the Corporation.

Research Ethics Board

The mandate of the WRHREB is to safeguard the rights, safety and well-being of all research participants in the hospital.

The REB reviews, approves and maintains continuing oversight of the conduct of a research project. Research must meet ethical and scientific standards.

For information about conducting research at WRH you may call the Research Ethics Board Office at:
519-254-5577 Ext. 52278

IDEA: ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the IDEA Framework is to provide a step-by-step process to help guide healthcare providers in working through ethical issues.

I – Identify the facts (medical indication, patient preferences, contextual features);

Ask: What is the ethical issue (s)?

D – Determine the relevant ethical principles (e.g. nature and scope, relative weights);

E – Explore the options (harm and benefits, strengths and limitations, laws and policies, mission, vision, values);

A – Act (recommend, implement, evaluate)

Ask: Are we (I) comfortable with this decision?

WHAT IS THE ETHICS RESPONSE TEAM’S ROLE:

The overarching role of the Ethics Response Team is to facilitate and support ethical decision-making throughout the organization through the identification, analysis and resolution of ethical issues.

This includes:

- Providing education on ethics-related topics;
- Reviewing, developing, implementing and evaluating ethics related policies;
- Coordinating ethics related issues with other hospital committees and working groups; and
- Conducting ethics consultations.

What is the Ethics Facilitator's role?

Windsor Regional Hospital has a number of Ethics Facilitators representing different programs and areas of professional practice within the organization. Ethics Facilitators are members of the Ethics Committee and have completed a series of education training modules.

Their role is to:

1. Act as a local champion for ethics within home program/unit/department.
2. Model ethical awareness, imagination and decision-making processes within home program/unit/department.
3. Serve as first contact for staff members who express ethical concerns. Suggest ethics consult for complex issues. Participate in ethics consult process when appropriate.
4. Assist in identifying educational needs and coordinate ethics education within home program/unit/department (rounds, in-services).