

Hornepayne Community Hospital

ETHICS PLAN

Adopted: April 1992

Reviewed:	Revised:	Initial:
April 2008	Yes	
July 2011	Yes	
June 2012	Yes	

Ethics Committee	3
Code of Ethics/Values/Principles	4
Code Objectives	5
Ethical Decision Making Process	6,7,8
Leadership Responsibilities	9
Compliance-Communication-Education.....	10
Reporting Violations	10
Investigation of Suspected Violations.....	11
Discipline of Violations	11
Guidelines for Making a Decision Regarding Ethical Issues	12

Ethics Committee

Administrative:

Core: Chief Executive Officer
Chairman of the Board
Department Managers

Ad Hoc: Other stakeholders depending on
issue/conflict

Medical:

Core: Chief of Staff
Chief Executive Officer
Chairman of the Board
Manager of Nursing Services
Nursing Staff
Legal Retainer

Ad Hoc: Other stakeholders depending on issue
ie. family, other caregivers, etc.

Code of Ethics/Values/Principles

This Code of Ethics applies to all employees, physicians, volunteers, students, officers, and governors of the Hornepayne Community Hospital, and we hereby affirm that:

We are committed to dealing fairly and ethically with all whom we associate and to conduct ourselves in accordance with our values.

We will adhere to a high standard of corporate ethics.

We will comply with all applicable Hornepayne Community Hospital policies and procedures, laws, rules, regulations, contracts, and will avoid any activities that could involve or lead to involvement in any unlawful practice.

Our Ethical Values:

Trustworthiness: We trust our colleagues as valued members of the healthcare team and pledge to treat one another with honesty, integrity, loyalty, and dignity.

Respect: We recognize and affirm the unique and intrinsic worth of each individual and treat all those we serve with dignity, courtesy, tolerance, privacy, acceptance, and autonomy.

Caring: We will treat all those we serve with compassion, kindness, and consideration.

Justice/Civic Virtue: We will act with procedural fairness, impartiality, consistency, equitably, honestly, and integrity in the way we conduct our business. We will be a law abiding, community minded, and be aware of the need to protect the environment.

Principles:

E = Empathy (understanding the thoughts and needs of others)

P = Patience (taking the time to understand before we act)

I = Integrity (honesty and truth in all situations)

C = Courage (doing what is right even when it is difficult)

Code Objectives

The purpose of this Ethic Plan is to provide employees, management, board, and physicians with guidance to make appropriate decisions when encountering ethical issues and policy-based questions, and when carrying out daily duties within appropriate ethical and legal standards.

These obligations apply to our relationship with patients, third-party payers, volunteers, students, subcontractors, suppliers, consultants, residents, community members and one another.

Our ethical plan is intended to reflect and preserve the highest ethical standards of patient care and business practices.

This plan is not intended to be exhaustive. Compliance with applicable government laws, rules and regulations, standards, contracts, accepted business and accounting rules and practises are essential.

Ethical Decision Making Process

Step #1 Identify the ethical issues. Obtain legal advice.

Step #2 If administrative, assemble the administrative committee
The Chief Executive Officer and Board in consultation with legal retainer will make the final decision when all information and options are presented.
If medical, the Chief of Staff will assemble the medical ethical team.
The Chief of Staff in consultation with legal department will make final decision when all the information and options presented and discussed.

Step #3 The committee will be presented with the ethical issue and identify any affected stakeholding that would be valuable to have on the committee. Timelines for salutation will be developed in order to facilitate timely solutions.

Step #4 Invite the appropriate stakeholders to a meeting to discuss the issue and present input. Consult legal retainer for legal advice for options presented.

Ethical Decision Making Process (continued)

Step #5 Carefully and following our ethical guidelines, values, and principles, and legal aspects, identify options for action.

Step #6 Select most appropriate or agreed upon option(s).

The committee will evaluate each option looking for positive and negative aspects of each and legal implications.

Ensure that pros and cons are based on facts. Try to leave out assumptions and beliefs.

Once the evaluation is complete, select what the committee as a whole believes to be the most appropriate solution based on the Hornepayne Community Hospital values, principles, and code of ethics. The Chief Executive Officer and Board taking into consideration all options and information will make final decision on administrative matters. The Chief of Staff taking into consideration all information and options will make the final decision.

Ethical Decision Making Process (continued)

Step #7 Communicate to the appropriate stakeholders affected by the decision and the method of implementation.

Step #8 Evaluate the decision.

Once the implementation is in effect, evaluate to ensure the desired goal is achieved.

This can be done as a process and outcome audit.

The evaluation should address – is it better, worse, or the same?

What new problems, if any, did the solution create?

Was the desired outcome achieved?

Leadership Responsibilities

While all of us are obliged to follow the code, we expect our leaders to set an example and to be in every respect a model.

We expect everyone at the Hornepayne Community Hospital with supervisory responsibility to carry out that responsibility in a manner that is kind, sensitive, thoughtful, and respectful.

We expect supervisors to create an environment where all team members feel free to raise concerns and propose their ideas.

We will ensure that everyone has access to sufficient information to comply with laws, regulations, and policies as they relate to their job as well as the resource to resolve ethical dilemmas.

We must never sacrifice ethical and compliant behaviour in the pursuit of our business objectives.

Compliance-Communication-Education

In order to ensure a high level of awareness the Code of Ethics/Values and Ethics Plan will be communicated to staff and the public.

The Ethics Plan will be available in all departments. Code of Ethics/Values will be posted throughout the facility. During annual performance appraisals employee will review.

The Code of Ethics/Values will be included in the hospital's Annual Report which is distributed to the public.

Reporting Violations

If anyone suspects a violation of the Code of Ethics/Values relating to hospital policy or law, they are to inform their immediate supervisor.

The Hornepayne Community Hospital, to the extent legally possible, will protect the confidentiality of any disclosed information and the identity of any employee/persons reporting a violation.

No employee will be subject to retaliation, discrimination or any other adverse employment action for reporting suspected violations in good faith pursuant to the terms of this plan or any applicable law.

Investigation of Suspected Violations

All reported violations shall be promptly investigated and treated confidentially to the greatest extent possible.

It is imperative that reporting persons not conduct their own investigation as they may involve legal issues and acting on your own may compromise the integrity of an investigation and adversely affect both you and the Hornepayne Community Hospital.

All Staff is required to co-operate with the investigation process.

Discipline for Violations

This code will be enforced at all levels, fairly and without prejudice.

Violations of this code and other company policies/procedures may be subject to disciplinary action.

Guidelines for making a decision regarding ethical issues

An ethical issue consists of:

- √ A conflict regarding values (at the organizational, personal or professional levels) or a conflict regarding principles
- √ A non-compliance with a commonly accepted belief (e.g. autonomy)
- √ A non-compliance with a value commonly accepted within the organization and at the personal or professional levels (e.g. compassion/empathy)
- √ A great injustice towards the person/malice on the part of any agent

Values of the Hornepayne Community Hospital

We will achieve our vision with honesty and integrity by:

- √ focusing on the needs of the individual;
- √ maintaining local and responsible administration;
- √ using financial, human as well as capital resources in an efficient manner;
- √ providing comprehensive health care to in-patients and outpatients, as well as community health care services;
- √ being sensitive to the changing needs;
- √ fostering a respectful and compassionate environment, among ourselves and toward the people we serve.

Ethical principles in the health field

The provision of care is a continuous process that seeks to balance the values, principles and interests regarding the allocation and delivery of health care services. Sometimes, the principles and values come into conflict and, in such conflicts, we must reflect on the situation in order to decide how we should proceed. Here are some important ethical principles that prevail in the provision of care:

- **Autonomy:** right to self-determination, independence and freedom. This includes the right to receive information, from the caregiver, on their health condition so that they can make informed decisions. Even if the caregiver does not agree with the client's decision, the caregiver must respect the client's choices, who will choose what is best for himself. An informed consent is an example of how this principle is applied.
- **Caring:** do "good". This requires that the caregiver act for the good of the client. Quality care requires that the caregiver be able to understand the perspective of the client in a manner that it respects their beliefs, emotions, desires and values, as well as those of his family and his relatives. Caring means to demonstrate compassion, to listen actively, to support and to take care of the client.
- **Non-maleficence:** protect against harm. This requires that the caregiver shall not harm his client, even if the client is not able to protect himself. The workplace hazards can put the client at risk. The staff must identify these risks and take action to prevent injuries.

Guidelines for making a decision regarding ethical issues (Page 2)

- **Justice:** the obligation to be fair to everyone, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, medical diagnosis, social status, financial status or religious beliefs. The principle of justice may include distributive justice as fair allocation and access to resources, and may also include procedural justice, or shared decision-making, including the person affected by the decision.
- **Confidentiality:** the obligation to keep the information of the patient and the organization confidential. Professional standards and the law regarding the privacy of personal health information provide us with the conditions under which health information may be disclosed morally and legally.
- **Sanctification of life:** the principle according to which life has equal and infinite value. In its extreme form (vitalism), this principle would be recognized at all costs, without considering the quality of life. A less extreme interpretation of this principle is that life has an instrumental value (has a sense).
- **Quality of life:** the principle according to which only the person in question may determine his own quality of life.
- **Non-paternalism:** avoiding to control, assess and decide what is good for a person, the person should decide himself (promoting autonomy). It is rare that one can justify paternalism with an adult who is mentally competent.
- **Truthfulness:** tell the truth, not consciously mislead or deceive clients. Based on mutual trust and respect for human dignity, the truth requires open and honest communications in order to help clients cope with the anxiety that information can cause.
- **Loyalty:** loyalty towards the relationship and/or ones role: a sacred trust associated to this relationship. People should act according to their respective roles.

As caregivers at the Hornepayne Community Hospital, which has the mandate to take care of the sick, their families and friends, with the unique obligation to serve all our clients with compassion, integrity and excellence, we are committed to:

- Respecting the dignity of every person
- Protecting the vulnerable
- Working together for the good of all
- Promoting ethical decision-making

Issues and situations that relate to ethics arise every day at Hornepayne Community Hospital. The following guidelines constitute the principle of reasonable responsibility that guide the decision-making process while respecting the principles of ethics in the health field:

- **Relevancy:** establish the issues, values, policies and facts which are relevant to the situation present before us. Ensure that the appropriate and right people are involved in the decision-making to solve the dilemma.

Guidelines for making a decision regarding ethical issues (Page 3)

- **Transparency:** identifying agents, their interests and values. Demonstrate transparency by publishing the decisions made.
- **Revision:** review the action plan and revise it when there is new information, new values and new elements arise.
- **Implementation:** ensure that the three conditions listed above are present. This requires specific instructions and there needs to be a way to determine if the process is respected.

A Guide to decide...

Part A: Relevancy

Clarifying the issue. Defining the problem that must be resolved. What is the conflict?

Who are the appropriate people who must be involved in the decision-making? Who should be part of the solution? Who is responsible for the decision-making?

Which of the relevant facts are known? This includes reference to policies, values, emotions, beliefs, laws and the elements that contribute to the problem (may be in conflict).

What is the importance of the disastrous consequences that could come about from the situation?

List the possible injuries. It is important to clarify the problem and define the immediate danger that the situation could pose.

Part B: Transparency

1. Identifying the agents (client, family members, caregivers, health care personnel)

Agents	Their expectations/ values	Their goals

2. What are the possible solutions?

Possible Solution No.1	Possible Solution No.2	Possible Solution No.3
Possible Solution	Possible Solution	Possible Solution
What values / principles are respected with this solution?	What values / principles are respected by this solution?	What values / principles are respected by this solution?
What values / principles are in conflict with regard to the solution?	What values / principles are in conflict with regard to this solution?	What values / principles are in conflict with regard to this solution?

Upon reflection, the best solution is Solution no _____

3. Why is this solution the best alternative? When said out loud, is it reasonable?
4. Describe the communication of the ethics plan (action and communication plan). Who needs to know the decision? Who will inform of the decision?

Part C: Revision

5. Level of confidence towards the decision that was taken? Responsibility demonstrated in the decision-making process?

Check -/	Level of confidence that the decision made was the right one
	Extremely confident - No amendments required regarding the decision. Consensus reached by the agents. Passed the transparency test... seems reasonable when said out loud. All agents are in agreement and would be willing to disclose the decision.
	Very confident - Not expected to review the decision. Reached a decision with which all agents are in agreement. Pass the transparency test. This is the best decision under the circumstances.
	Somewhat confident - May be required to review the decision. A little discomfort is felt by agents. A little discomfort when unveiled publicly (when said out loud, does not seem reasonable). Continue discussions or consult outside the group.
	No very confident - Must revise the decision. Discomfort expressed by the agents. Does not pass the transparency test (does not seem reasonable when said out loud). Consult outside the group.
	Not confident - Cannot reach a consensus on the best course of action to be taken. Review the components, policies, clarify values, consult with other agents (e.g. ethics committee). See that the decision is reviewed.

Part D: Implementation

To ensure an ethical decision is made, three conditions must be met: relevancy, transparency and revision. Senior management must ensure that these guidelines will be put in place. It is important that the process be assessed. Was the integrity of the principles in the guidelines been compromised during the process or debate?