

# Ethical Decision Making Framework



## The YODA Model

**Y** - You

**O** - Observe

**D** - Deliberate

**A** - Act

## A Principle Based Framework/Process for Ethical Decision Making

The following principle based framework/ process for ethical decision making is grounded in the Mission, Vision and Values of Homewood Health.

### Steps for Resolving Ethical Dilemmas:

#### YOU

As a rational person with the capacity for moral agency, Ethics is everyone's responsibility.

#### OBSERVE

##### 1. Identify the Problem

- Name the problem clearly. Where is the conflict?

##### 2. Acknowledge Feelings

- What are the "gut" reactions? biases? loyalties?

##### 3. Gather the Facts

- What are the ethically relevant facts?
- Have all the relevant perspectives been obtained?
- What do the institution's policies or guidelines say?
- What does the relevant law say? \*

#### Facts in Biomedical Ethics Issues:

- Diagnosis/Prognosis
- Quality of Life
- Patient /SDM Wishes
- Contextual Features – e.g.
  - Religion
  - Culture
  - Psychosocial issues
  - Relationships

#### Facts in Organizational Ethics Issues:

- Governance
- Partnerships
- Allocation/Rationing of Scarce Resources
- Conscientious Objection
- Employer/Employee Relationships
- Conflict of Interest
- Alternative Sources of Revenue
- Abuse of Care Providers
- Whistle blowing

# Ethical Decision Making Framework

## DELIBERATE

### 4. Consider Alternatives

- What are the alternative courses of actions?
- What are the likely consequences?

### 5. Examine Values

- What are the preferences of the person receiving care?
- Are other values relevant?
- Which of the values conflict?

### 6. Evaluate Alternatives

Identify appropriate decision makers.

- Rank all relevant values, i.e. values of Homewood Health: Collaboration, Integrity, Service Excellence
- These values are derived from and relate to the values, for example: dignity of every human being and the interconnectedness of every human being. They also ground the ethical values of:
  - Respect for Autonomy (the person's right to self-determine),
  - Beneficence (the duty to do good),
  - Non-Maleficence (to not cause harm) and
  - Justice (being fair without prejudice)
- Justify ranking by appealing to the ethical values and principles above in order to prioritize the most appropriate alternatives in the given context.
- Evaluate the short and long term consequences in terms of principles. What alternatives are excluded?

## ACT

### 7. Articulate the Decision

- Which alternative best reflects the ranking of values?
- Which alternative best balances more of the values?
- Have any other alternatives come to light?

### 8. Implement the Plan

- How should the decision be communicated?
- Who needs to know it?
- How best to document the process?
- Who needs to act?

### 9. Concluding Review

- What are the feelings of those involved?
- Did we resolve the ethical dilemma?
- Were other ethical problems inadvertently created in the process?
- Do we need to debrief with care providers?
- Would it be helpful to modify and/or create new policies or guidances in.



To speak to Homewood Health's Bioethicist, please call **519-824-1010 ext. 32118**. If it is after business hours or on weekends, please speak to your healthcare team to have the Bioethicist on-call paged.

This brochure was adapted from the material developed by the Centre for Clinical Ethics at St. Michael's Hospital.

**HomewoodHealth.com**

\*This guide provides general information about the current law in this subject area. However, legal information is not the same as legal advice, where legal advice is the application of law to an individual's specific circumstances. Although we have tried to make sure that the information in this guide is accurate and useful, we recommend that you consult a lawyer if you want professional legal advice in this subject area that is appropriate to your particular situation.

© 2023 Homewood Health™ | Ethical Decision Making Framework\_July2023