



# The ethics consultation process: What you need to know...

Ethics consultation provides a facilitated forum for thoughtful exploration of how to act well and make morally sound choices based on beliefs and values about life, health, suffering and death.

## How can the ethics committee help in ethics consultation?

The Ethics committee is available to clients, their families and health care professionals, to help them identify, understand and resolve difficult healthcare ethics questions.

The Ethics committee is a consultative and advisory body and does not make decisions regarding client care or the organization's policies.

## Who can refer for a consultation?

The Ethics committee will accept referrals from physicians, staff, volunteers and clients where an ethical issue or dilemma regarding client care or organization's policies exists.

## How are referrals made?

A referral can be made by filling out the form that is a part of this brochure. If you

need help deciding whether an ethics consultation would help you, please feel free to talk to the Ethics committee chair by calling (709) 257-5226 or go to Central Health's website: [www.centralhealth.nl.ca](http://www.centralhealth.nl.ca) and click on the Ethics contact link. If the concern is health related and requires immediate attention please contact a member of the client care team.

## What information is needed?

The Ethics committee will expect a completed referral form including:

- A clear statement of the concern
- An idea about what has already been done to deal with the concern
- The name of the person(s) making the referral
- An idea of how urgent the concern is



## What does the Ethics consultation consider?

Ethics consultations consider the following ethical principles (guidelines that help make the best possible decisions):

- Respect for client autonomy and self-determination
- Beneficence (doing good)
- Non-maleficence (not doing harm)
- Justice and fairness

## What results can be expected?

All consultations are confidential and are bound by the same policies and procedures as other client and organizational records.

The Ethics committee's role is advisory only. The final decision about a health related issue lies with the client (or legal representative) and the care team. The final decision about organizational policy lies with the organization's leadership and/or governance teams.

Complete, tear off and return to:

Ethics Committee, Dr. Hugh Twomey Health Centre, P.O. Box 250, Botwood, NL A0H 2E0

If this referral is URGENT please call (709) 257-5226 to discuss

## Request for Ethics Consultation (Referral) Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of referral (check one):  Urgent  For regular meeting

Referral completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information of person making referral (telephone and/or email address): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to referred case: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of ethical concern - Please include clear details of the situation in which the concern(s) arose: \_\_\_\_\_  
(additional space is provided on reverse): \_\_\_\_\_





## Ethics and values... helping you make the right choice



CH-ETH 001

## Ethics committee

### What is *ethics* in health care?

In health care settings, ethical questions arise when *the right thing to do* is unclear, or when people disagree about an organizational practice or what is best for a client (*client includes patients, residents and families*).

### What is the *ethics committee*?

The Central Health Ethics committee is made up of health care workers and individuals from the community who are interested in health care ethics issues and who are willing to increase their ethics knowledge and skill. They work together to protect the rights of individuals receiving and providing health care services. They act as a resource for those who make decisions about client care. The role of the ethics committee is to increase awareness and knowledge and provide supports regarding *ethics* in our region. The committee has four main focuses:

- Research
- Clinical consultation
- Education
- Organizational ethics

Good ethical decision making within and outside of the Ethics committee is guided by the regional values statement.

### Central Health values

**Accountability** — Each person is responsible for giving their absolute best effort to achieving the success of the organization's vision of healthy people in healthy communities.

**Collaboration** — Each person works as part of a team and partners with other providers and organizations to best meet the holistic needs of clients and the organization.

**Excellence** — Each person contributes to quality improvement and a culture of safety through the life-long development of their knowledge, skills and use of best practices.

**Fairness** — Each person engages in practices that promote equity and adherence to ethical standards.

**Privacy** — Each person respects privacy and protects confidential information.

**Respect** — Each person is committed to fostering an environment that embraces respect, dignity and diversity and encourages honest, effective communication.