

SECTION: Board of Governors

DIRECTIVE: III-E-20

SUBJECT: Ethics

AUTHORITY: Board of Governors

EFFECTIVE DATE			REVISED DATE			POLICY	X	PROCEDURE	X
MON	DAY	YEAR	MON	DAY	YEAR				
02	24	2010				Applies to: All Staff; All Professional Staff			

POLICY

It is the purpose of this policy to provide guidance to Hospital and Professional staff, Volunteers, learners, patients and their families regarding how to identify, manage and resolve ethical issues that may arise in the course of operations of the Hospital.

It is also the purpose of this policy to charge other standing committees of the Hospital to develop, regularly review and revise policies and procedures that, either directly or indirectly support and enhance ethical care and practices at the West Haldimand General Hospital.

While the direction of the care and management of inpatients or outpatients registered with the Hospital remains the responsibility of the most responsible credentialed member of the Professional staff in the Hospital, it is the policy of this Hospital that:

1. The philosophy and values of the Hospital as expressed in the Mission Statement and Values Statement, in conjunction with the Code of Ethics of each discipline, should form the basis for ethical healthcare delivery in the Hospital by each practitioner and Hospital staff member.
2. The Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) and its subcommittees are responsible for developing, regularly reviewing, revising and educating staff with respect to policies and procedures which support ethical care and practices within the Hospital.
3. The Medical Advisory Committee, other multidisciplinary and administrative committees of the Hospital may address ethical issues, providing support and guidance and identifying the need for further policy or procedure development, regular review, revision and education required.
4. Each member of the healthcare team or any other person may seek guidance when ethical concerns related to the management of patient care exist. Expert resources at Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS - including the Ethics committee) may be utilized for further support and guidance, if internal resources are insufficient to respond satisfactorily to a situation.

PROCEDURE

For concerns related to moral and ethical issues in the management of patient care:

1. Staff member(s) involved in the care of a patient will identify and discuss the concerns or identified potential ethical issues and, as appropriate, will consult with the relevant Professional staff member involved with the care of the patient.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved, the staff member(s) involved shall consult with their immediate manager for assistance in resolving the concern or issue.

3. Further assistance may be sought from other relevant resources in the Hospital, to respond to the specific issue at hand.

Specific resource people who may be contacted for ethical issues include, but are not limited to:

- Clinical Managers
 - Chief of Staff
 - Pastoral Care
 - Clinical Educator
 - Human Resources
 - Chief Nursing Officer
4. Referral to the Joint Ethics Committee: Complete the Joint Ethics Committee – Request for Consultation form – see attached form and Guidelines for Completion of Form. Forward completed form to the Chair of the Joint Ethics Committee by sealed envelope or electronically.
 5. For consultation after normal business hours, the Administrator On Call will respond and may in turn involve other relevant resource people, including other staff and physician(s) involved in the care of the patient/family. In an emergency, the Chief of Staff and Chief Nursing Officer will act as primary resources.
 6. If the issue, concern or conflict remains unresolved after the involvement of resource staff, the issue will be referred to the MAC. The purpose of this group's involvement will be to problem-solve the issue in order to resolve the ethical issue. The MAC will invite those with relevant information to this meeting in order to obtain the greatest perspective with respect to the issues.
 7. If necessary, consultation with Hamilton Health Sciences expert resources related to ethics (i.e., Risk Management Services, Ethics committee) will be contacted for assistance.

For concerns relating to ethical or moral issues of a general nature or involving policy issues:

1. The appropriate Manager will act as the primary contact for the Resources Group, or specific individuals within the Group who may be contacted, as outlined in item (3) above.
2. The Joint Ethics Committee member will review the issue and if an ethical or moral issue of a general nature or policy issue is evident, the Joint Ethics Committee member will assist with a presentation to the full Joint Ethics Committee.
3. The recommendations of the Joint Ethics Committee will be forwarded to the appropriate committee (i.e., Management Committee, MAC, Quality committee of the Board, etc).
4. If necessary, expert resource staff at Hamilton Health Sciences (i.e., Risk Management, Ethics committee) may be sought at any step by the Chief of Staff or the Chief Nursing Officer on the advice of the Joint Ethics Committee.
5. Involved Hospital staff and physicians will be informed of the progress of the issue(s), final recommendations and actions. Any changes in Hospital policies/procedures will be communicated to staff as soon as possible, in the usual manner.

DEFINITIONS

Ethics: Study of rational processes for determining the most morally desirable course or action when making a decision or a reflection of how we make decisions about what we should do. "Ethics always involves thinking and feeling, study and practice, knowledge and intuition."¹

FORMS

Request for Consultation Form – see attached form.

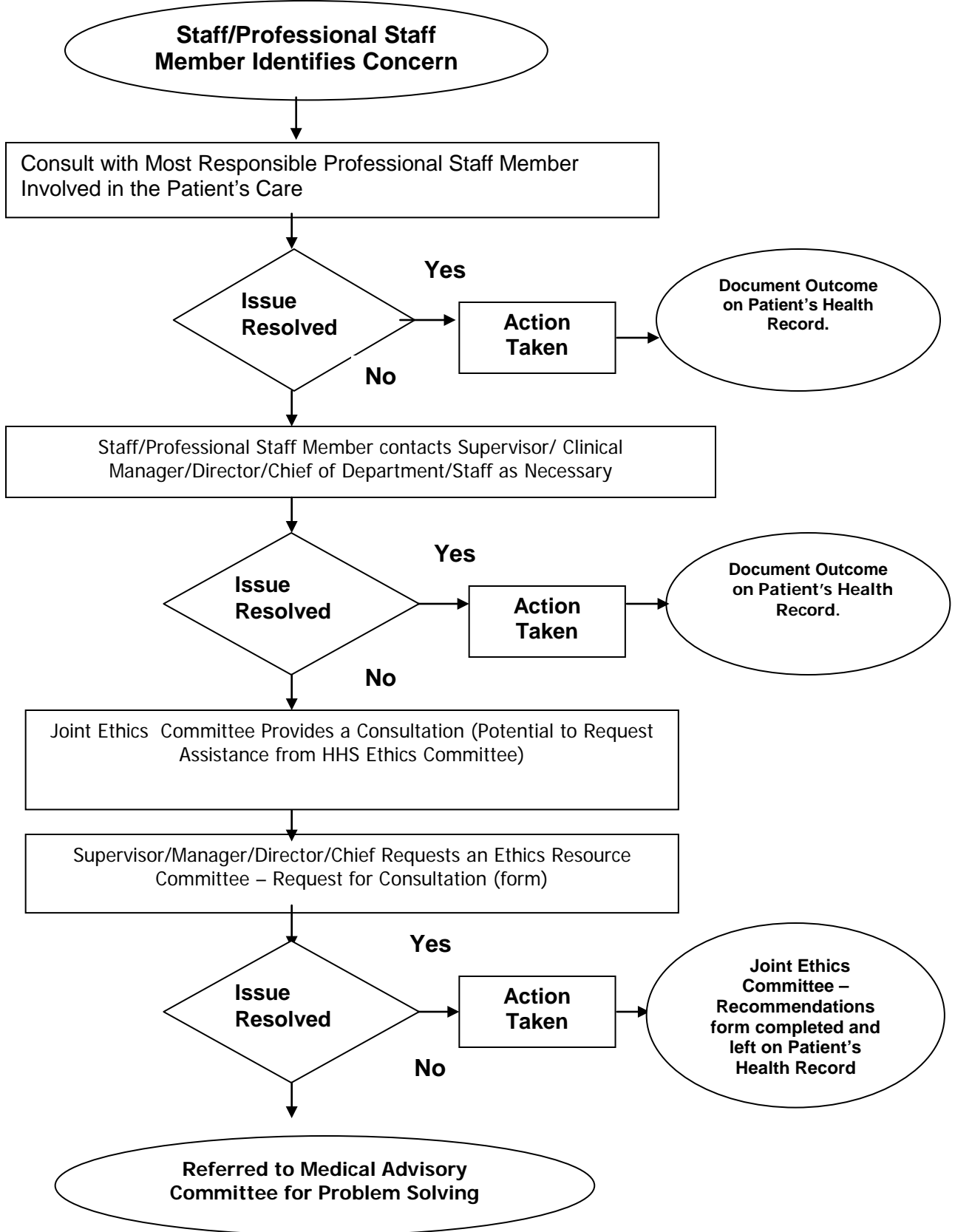
Guidelines for Completion of Request for Consultation Form – see attached form.

Recommendations Form – see attached form.

REFERENCE

1. T. Schundin & Farr, 1994. Everyday Ethics, 1997. Canadian Nurses Association.

Moral and Ethical Issues In Management Of Patient Care



**WHGH – JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION**

Ethical Dilemma

Please state the ethical dilemma in one or two sentences.

Client

Include client's preferences, competency, advanced directives, designated decision-maker.

Clinical Situation

Include the client's diagnosis, prognosis, medical history, treatment goals and probability of success, current and expected quality of life.

Individuals Impacted/Involved

State family, caregivers, healthcare providers – include relationship to client.

Contextual Considerations

Include any cultural, legal, family and/or religious issues that are pertinent to situation.

Other Factors for Consideration

Urgency of Request

State timeframe for decision.

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

Please forward form to:

Chair, Joint Ethics Committee by sealed envelope or electronically to:

WEST HALDIMAND GENERAL HOSPITAL

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE – REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION

(Do not include patient's name or next of kin/substitute decision maker on this request form due to privacy regulations and bias implications)

- For client-related ethical dilemmas, all areas of the *Joint Ethics Committee – Request for Consultation Form* must be completed.
- If the ethical dilemma is not client-based, complete all areas with the exception of **Clinical Situation and Client**.
- The Joint Ethics Committee may request further information from the submitter or may ask the submitter for permission to gather information from other stakeholders.
- Additional pages or clinical data may be attached to the submission as needed.

Ethical Dilemma

- State the ethical dilemma in one sentence, if possible – what question is being asked of the Joint Ethics Committee?

Client

- Include client's preferences (if known) and any advanced directives.
- Competency/designated decision-maker
- Benefits and risks of specific treatment protocols as explained to and understood by client/caregiver

Individual(s) Impacted/Involved

- Family, friends, caregivers, healthcare providers
- Include relationship to client, if applicable
- For whom is the decision being made
- Who will experience the greatest degree of impact from the decision

Contextual Considerations

- Cultural, family and/or religious beliefs/issues that are pertinent to situation
- Standards of practice, legal considerations
- Declare any personal value and/or moral conflicts

Other Factors for Consideration

- Include any other information that the committee should be aware of when considering recommendations

Urgency of Request

- State the preferred date/time frame to receive Joint Ethics Committee's recommendations

Sign and date form and submit to the Chair of the Joint Ethics Committee using electronic format or in a sealed envelope.

**WHGH – JOINT ETHICS COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Your case was reviewed in accordance with the Joint Ethics Committee's *Decision Making Model*.

Date:

Ethical Dilemma:

Committee Recommendations and Rationale:

SAMPLE

Submitted by: Chair Joint Ethics Committee

Signature: _____

Any questions are to be directed to the Joint Ethics Committee Chair for further discussion/clarification with the Joint Ethics Committee members.