

Ethical Decision-Making Tool

We need to make a decision about: _____

Step 1: Background (Gather)

The facts and context (e.g., clinical, social, cultural, systemic considerations) related to the decision are:

We still do not know/are unsure about:



The way we can find out about this is:

Step 2: Stakeholders (Gather and Refine)

Stakeholders have the following needs and interests, biases, views about best outcome, and values:

| Stakeholder (e.g., care provider, patient, SDM) | Needs and Interests (e.g., secure housing, compliance) | Biases (e.g., emotions, habits, prejudices) | View of Best Outcome (e.g., painless death, discharge) | Values (e.g., risk minimization, autonomy, dignity) |
|---|--|---|--|---|
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| | | | | |
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Step 3: Other Duties (Gather)

Legal: _____

College: _____

Hospital Policy: _____

Health Ethics Guide: _____

Other: _____

Step 4: Priority Values (Refine)

Circle the **Unity Health values** that are most important in this situation and add the **key values** from the "Values" column, above.

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Human Dignity | Inclusivity |
| Compassion | _____ |
| Excellence | _____ |
| Community | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Continued other side...

Step 5: Option Analysis (Refine and Evaluate)

The options for responding to this situation have the following risks, benefits, and associated values:

| Options (Describe options below.) | Risks/Disadvantages and <i>Who They Affect</i> | Benefits/Advantages and <i>Who They Affect</i> | Associated Values |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Option #1: | | | |
| Option #2: | | | |
| Option #3: | | | |

Add additional rows as needed in digital document or use the back of this sheet.

Step 6: Evaluate the Options

To identify the most justifiable option, assess which option:

- has the most **acceptable risk/benefit** ratio?
- is most consistent with the **values of affected patients** (and their families as appropriate)?
- does the best job of responding to **inequities or systemic injustices**, where possible?
- best balances **Unity Health Values** and other **key values** that are at stake? (see Step 4)
- is most consistent with **other duties** specified by law, policy, etc.?
- is based on reasons **understandable to all stakeholders**?
- is based on reasons you are **comfortable making public**?

Some tips:

- If the issue involves a capable patient's right to accept risks, then you may downplay risks.
- Unacceptable risks? Modify options or rule them out.
- Missing a key value? Modify the option(s) or combine multiple options to capture more values.

If these questions consistently pick out one option (or one combination of options), it may be the best choice.

Step 7: BEST OPTION

Step 8: Act with Transparency

| | |
|---|---|
| What is the plan for following through on our decision? | What opportunities will there be for feedback and reflection (e.g., debrief, follow-up, appeals)? |
|---|---|

For additional support contact clinical ethics
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