

# From Principle to Practice: What is An Ethics Framework?

Carlee Seiler, MHE

Clinical and Organizational Ethics Fellow



We are privileged to provide care on lands that Indigenous peoples have called home for thousands of years.



# Webinar Housekeeping

- Everyone will be muted except the host, moderator and panelists
- Ask questions through the Teams chat box
- All webinars will be recorded and posted on the internal PEaCE Hub page and on the Regional Ethics Network (REN) Website
- Please take a moment to scan the QR code to complete the evaluation

HHS Ethics Rounds & Community  
Education Sessions



# Objective

Learn how to utilize an ethics framework in managing moral dilemmas in healthcare practice.

- ▶ What is an Ethics Framework?
- ▶ Why do we need an Ethics Framework?
- ▶ The Ethics Framework as a Tool for Decision Making
- ▶ Where can you find the Ethics Framework?

# What is an Ethics Framework?

- ▶ An Ethics Framework provides guidance to promote ethical decision-making and resources to support all members of the HHS and REN community

# Why do we need an Ethics Framework?

- ▶ The Ethics Framework has two purposes:

To provide a common approach to guide ethical decision-making;

To outline the structures and resources available to support ethical decision-making

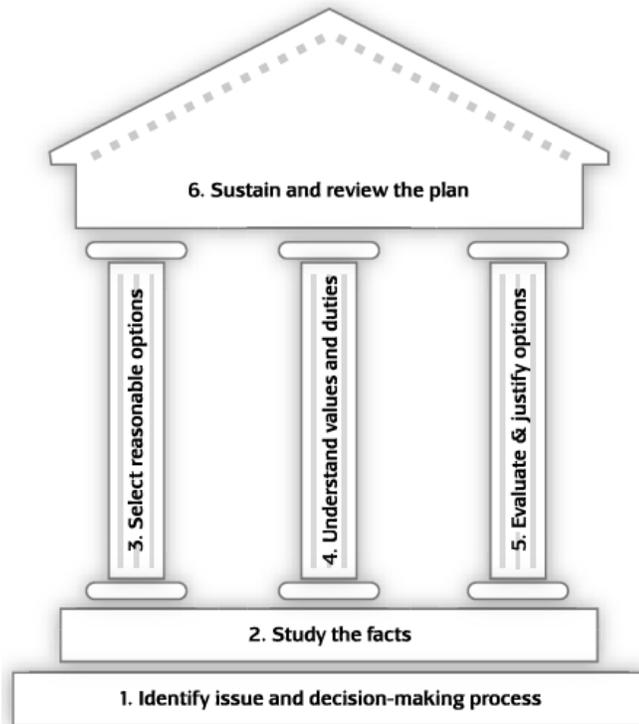
# When Should you Use the Ethics Framework?

Signs that prompt the use of the framework include:

- ▶ Are you wondering: “What is the right thing to do?”
- ▶ Are you or other people involved experiencing worry, confusion, distress or guilt about an issue?
- ▶ Are you feeling caught between two or more obligations?
- ▶ Do multiple options seem right, or seem wrong?
- ▶ Is there disagreement about a patient’s care plan?
- ▶ Is there conflict on the team about what is fair or right?
- ▶ Are there power dynamics that make it hard to speak up about concerns?
- ▶ Are you concerned about possible harms to some persons?
- ▶ Is the law or hospital policy unclear about what to do in this situation?

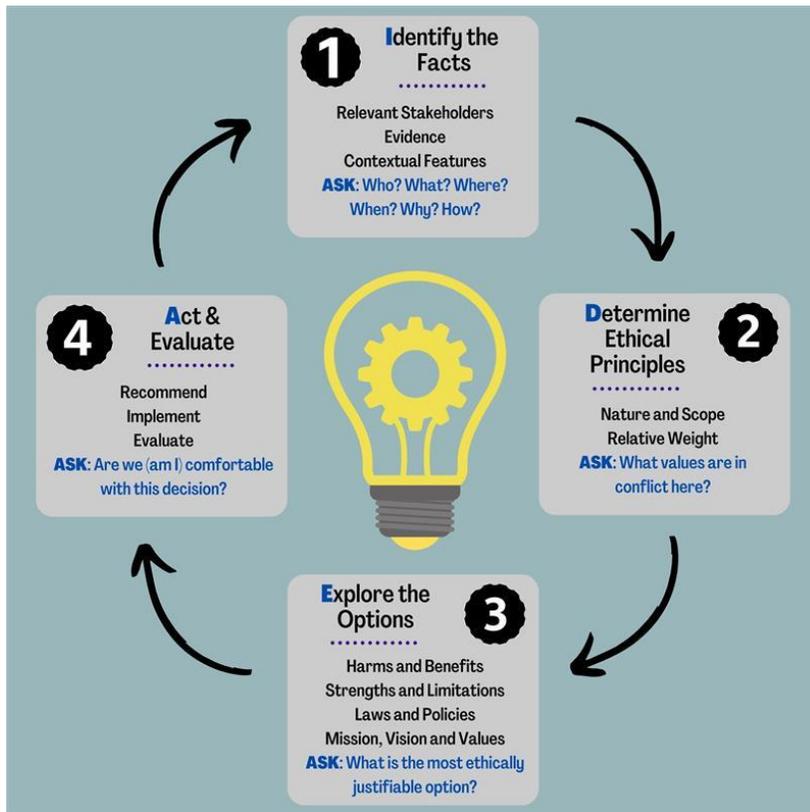
# HHS Ethics Framework as a Tool for Decision Making: ISSUES 2

## Ethical Decision-Making: ISSUES



1. Identify the issue and decision making process
2. Study the facts
3. Select reasonable options
4. Understand values and duties
5. Evaluate & justify options
6. Sustain and review the plan

# REN Ethics Framework as a Tool for Decision Making: IDEA 2

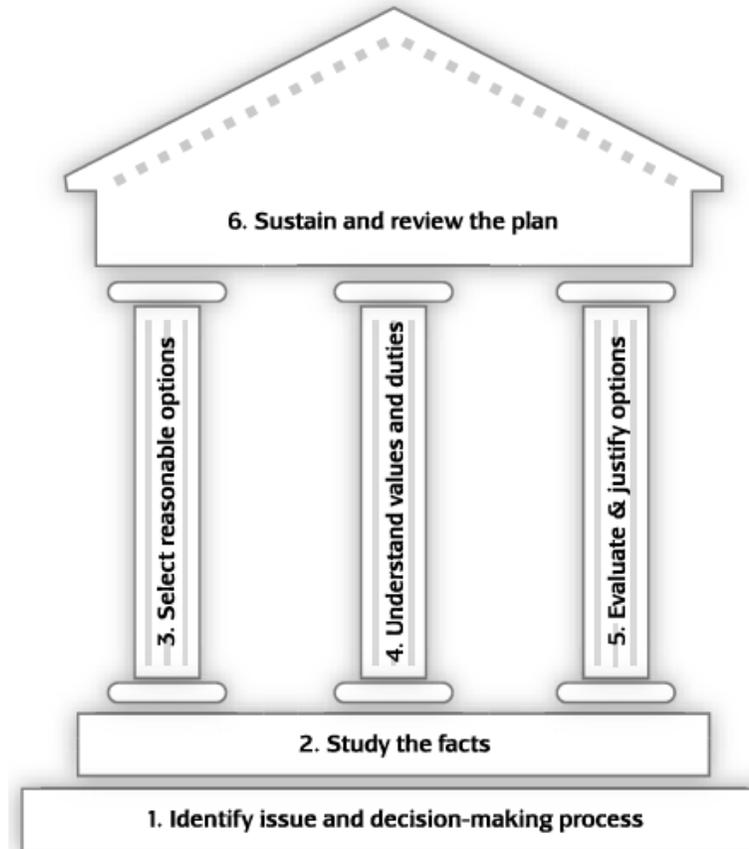


1. Identify the facts
2. Determine ethical principles
3. Explore the Options
4. Act & Evaluate

# Case:

- ▶ Your patient is refusing all food. The patient's family has asked that you do everything possible to ensure their loved one is receiving adequate nutrition, including feeding the patient against their will. What should you do?

## Ethical Decision-Making: ISSUES



# 1. Identify the issue and decision making process

Reflection questions:

- ▶ What is your gut reaction to the situation?
- ▶ What is the ethical issue/dilemma/conflict as you see it?
- ▶ What are your personal biases (implicit or explicit) and values, and how might these impact your perspective?
- ▶ Who is impacted by the situation?
- ▶ How can all stakeholders be engaged?

## 2. Study the facts

Gather information from a variety of stakeholders including patients and families if possible

- ▶ Evidence informed practice
- ▶ Stakeholder perspectives
- ▶ Resource implications
- ▶ Contextual factors

# 3. Select reasonable options

► What are two or more realistic options?

<input type="checkbox"/> Stop feeding the patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Force feed the patient
<input type="checkbox"/> Family meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Offer the patient different meal options
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss barriers to eating with the patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Tube feeding

# 4. Understand values and duties

- ▶ What principles, values, and duties are relevant to the situation?
  - ▶ Autonomy
  - ▶ Beneficence
  - ▶ Non-maleficence
  - ▶ Justice
- ▶ What are the legal requirements, professional standards, and policies?
- ▶ Are key values, duties, principles, or standards in conflict?

# 5. Evaluate and justify options

- ▶ What are the possible harms/benefits of various options to different stakeholders?
  - ▶ Ex. Not feeding the patient
    - ▶ Benefit: respects patient's autonomy
    - ▶ Harm: may cause harm to the patient
- ▶ **Choose the option that best aligns with duties, principles, and values**
- ▶ State clear reason for your choice; anticipate questions and criticisms

## 6. Sustain and review the plan

- ▶ Identify how best to implement, communicate and document the decision
- ▶ Reflect on the decision and the process
  - ▶ What lessons can be learned?
  - ▶ How can these lessons be shared?
  - ▶ Is there a quality improvement opportunity?
- ▶ Does this situation point to a systemic issue, such as a policy gap? How might it be addressed?

# Where can you find the Ethics Framework?

**HHS hub** News & Events Your HHS Initiatives HHS Learn Knowledge & Tools About Us

Antimicrobial Stewardship Program (ASP)  
Biomedical Technology  
Capital Finance  
Clinical Informatics  
Communications and Public Affairs  
Corporate Services  
Diagnostic Services  
Dietetics  
Emergency Medicine  
Engineering and Facilities Management  
Genetic Counsellors  
HHS-K9-Assist-Program  
Infection Prevention and Control  
Interprofessional Practice  
Juravinski Hospital Hospitalist Program  
Legal Services Department  
Medical Affairs  
Medical Radiation Technology  
Nursing  
Occupational Therapy  
Oncology Program

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## Program for Ethics and Care Ecologies (PEaCE)

**November 2-8 is National Health Ethics Week (NHEW) 2025**

Ethics Week provides an opportunity for healthcare organizations, workers, and the public to raise awareness and discuss ethical issues in healthcare and in our communities.

The theme of NHEW 2025 is "Ethics in Times of Turbulence and Disruption." This year we explore how to ensure the delivery of healthcare and social services in times of conflict, crisis, political tensions, disruptive technologies such as AI, resource constraints, and other challenges facing our health systems.

**How to participate in NHEW at HHS:**

- Attend Educational Events:** There are five virtual educational events planned for NHEW at HHS on November 3-7 at noon. We will explore themes such as capacity, conflict management, working with substitute decision-makers, and addressing ethical issues in the workplace. Please see the NHEW flyer for more information. Outside of HHS, you can visit the [Canadian Bioethics Society webpage](#) for information on additional presentations, workshops, and discussions hosted by health institutions, universities, ethics committees, or community organizations across Canada.
- Team Resources and Activities:** The NHEW flyer contains suggested group activities that have been curated for teams. Use these activities at your CQI huddles or team meetings as a starting point for ethics conversations with your colleagues.
- Check out Ethics Resources:** On the Ethics page on the HHS Hub you will find various ethics resources such as FAQs, decision-making frameworks, and recordings of ethics education. You can review these individually or share relevant resources with members of your teams. We also encourage health professional staff to review their own codes of ethics during Ethics Week.
- 3Rs: Reflect, Raise Awareness, and Reach** out to HHS ethics team members for questions, thoughts, concerns, and education. The Ethics Team is happy to attend team huddles or events to offer support and education.

**Links**

- [HHS Ethics Framework](#)
- [Contacts & About Us](#)
- [Ethics Consultation Service](#)
- [Ethics Policy Review](#)
- [Ethics Resources](#)
- [Ethics, Resilience & Diversity Rounds](#)
- [MAID resources](#)
- [Ethics External Website](#)
- [Regional Ethics Network](#)
- [Resilience Resources and Support](#)
- [Pause, Reset, Nourish](#)

**Regional Ethics Network**

WELCOME TO REGIONAL ETHICS NETWORK ETHICS AND DIVERSITY ROUNDS COMMUNITY ETHICS ALLIANCE

COVID-19 RESOURCES **RESOURCES** ETHICS COURSES UPCOMING EVENTS NHEW RESOURCES CONTACT

ETHICS FAQs  
ETHICS TOOLS

## REGIONAL ETHICS NETWORK

BRINGING ETHICS TO LIFE IN HEALTHCARE

### Protected: Ethics Tools

You can find a template of the Ethics Framework and series of ethics decision-making tools. These can be adopted for the purpose of meeting Accreditation Canada standards. More importantly, these tools are useful for the front-line staff, physicians and learners as a first step to attempt resolving difficult ethics situations.

- [Ethics Framework \(template\)](#)
- [IDEA Framework Worksheet](#)

**SHORTCUTS**

- Contact
- Welcome to Regional Ethics Network Team
- Healthcare Ethics Basics
- Ethics FAQs
- COVID-19 Resources
- Community Ethics Alliance
- Ethics for Community Service Agencies
- Community Ethics Alliance Steering Committee (CEA)

Questions?