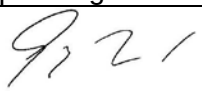
SFMH ST. FRANCIS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL **Policy & Procedure**	Policy Name: **ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**	Manual Administration
	Last Reviewed / Revised Date: Mar /12, Apr /16, Dec /16, Jan 17	Category : Ethics
	Approved by: Chief Operating Officer	Original Date: May 2010
	Signature 	Committee/Dept Review: MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee

Purpose:

To ensure that clinical and organizational decision making is guided by recognized ethical values and principles, as well as the St Francis Memorial Hospital mission, vision and values.

St. Francis Memorial Hospital promotes a moral environment that values personal and professional integrity. Inherent in this is respect of the patients' values and their right, with the support of family members and care providers, to make ethical decisions regarding their care. ***Every effort will be made to ensure that the patient is the principle decision-maker and they are supported in their choices.***

The hospital has joined with local health service agencies to form the **Madawaska Communities Circle of Health Joint Advisory Ethics Committee**. This committee is composed of representatives from five (5) agencies: St. Francis Memorial Hospital, Barry's Bay and Area Home Support (BBAHS), Madawaska Valley Association of Community Living (MVACL), Valley Manor and the Madawaska Valley Hospice and Palliative Care (MVHPC). This committee acts as a resource for staff, patients and patient's families on issues related to ethics. The terms of reference for the committee are located in the Ethics section of the St. Francis Memorial Administrative policies.

1. Dimensions include situations arising between:

- providers (including administrative personnel);
- providers and patient;
- Family members.

2. The Hospital's ethical framework for decision making can be used to guide staff when deliberating about ethical issues (see Appendix A).

St Francis Memorial Hospital's procedure for resolving ethical conflict:

a) The patient or family may identify a conflict doing any of the steps for resolving an ethical conflict.
b) The staff on the unit/Department in which it occurs may identify the conflict.
c) The Manager/Department Head will intervene initially in cases dealing with conflict between staff members and/or a patient/staff member on their unit.
d) If the problem remains unresolved, the problem should be discussed with the Director of Patient Care Services, or Chief Operating Officer.

i. A family conference will be arranged to assist with ethical decision- making regarding care and in cases of unresolved family conflict regarding the patients' care.
   The family ministerial representative may be invited to participate in this session if the patient/family desire.
ii. If all efforts fail to resolve the conflict, a member of the MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee may be invited to sit on a second family conference.
iii. The MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee may be consulted to review ethical situations using the case consultation form.
iv. The Registered Nurse/staff member involved should document the concerns, the steps taken and the resolution.

e) The team/staff members can bring forward the case review and resolution to the MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee for feedback.

APPENDIX A

ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING FRAMEWORK

Ethics is about making "right" or "good" choices and the reasons that we give for our choices and actions. Ethics promotes reflective practice in the delivery of health care. Ethics addresses the question "What should we do and why?"

Another way to describe ethics is as follows. It is about:

- Deciding what we should do – what decisions are morally right or acceptable;
- Explaining why we should do it – justifying our decision using language of values and principles; and
- Describing how we should do it – outlining an appropriate process for enacting the decision.[2]

Ethical issues arise every day in health care (See Appendix A). Everyone has a role to play in ensuring the ethical delivery of care, from bedside to boardroom. St Francis Memorial Hospital is committed to providing quality compassionate care to the community it serves. Ethical principles and values are incorporated into the way that decisions are made and care is delivered every day. Accreditation Canada expects that healthcare organizations will have in place a framework for guiding ethical behavior that is publicly accessible and consistent with the law.

As healthcare organizations seek to provide quality care in the face of significant financial constraints, they face difficult decisions. Both technical (e.g., cost-effectiveness analyses) and principle-based solutions (e.g., distributive justice) alone are limited in their ability to resolve priority-setting challenges (Gibson, Martin, & Singer, 2005). Given that there may be competing goals and values, ensuring procedural fairness may be the best way to ensure that decisions are socially accepted and demonstrate public accountability (Gibson et al., 2005).

The purpose of the IDEA: Ethical Decision-Making Framework (see Figure 2) is to provide a step-by-step, fair process to help guide healthcare providers and administrators in working through ethical issues encountered in the delivery of healthcare. The Framework can be used to guide decision-making and actions about ethical issues that arise from the bedside to the boardroom. The framework addresses two general types of ethical decisions that lie across a continuum: clinical and organizational.

Clinical ethical decisions are typically those that involve and impact specific patients or staff members and focus on individual values (e.g., Should Mr. B's life-sustaining treatment be discontinued?). Organizational ethical decisions are generally those that involve and impact groups of patients or staff members, units, systems, or the organization as a whole and centre on the values of the organization (e.g., Should the program be expanded, reduced, or remain unchanged?). Some ethical decisions may be predominantly clinical in nature; others will be largely organizationally focused. A number of ethical decisions will have both clinical and organizational aspects.

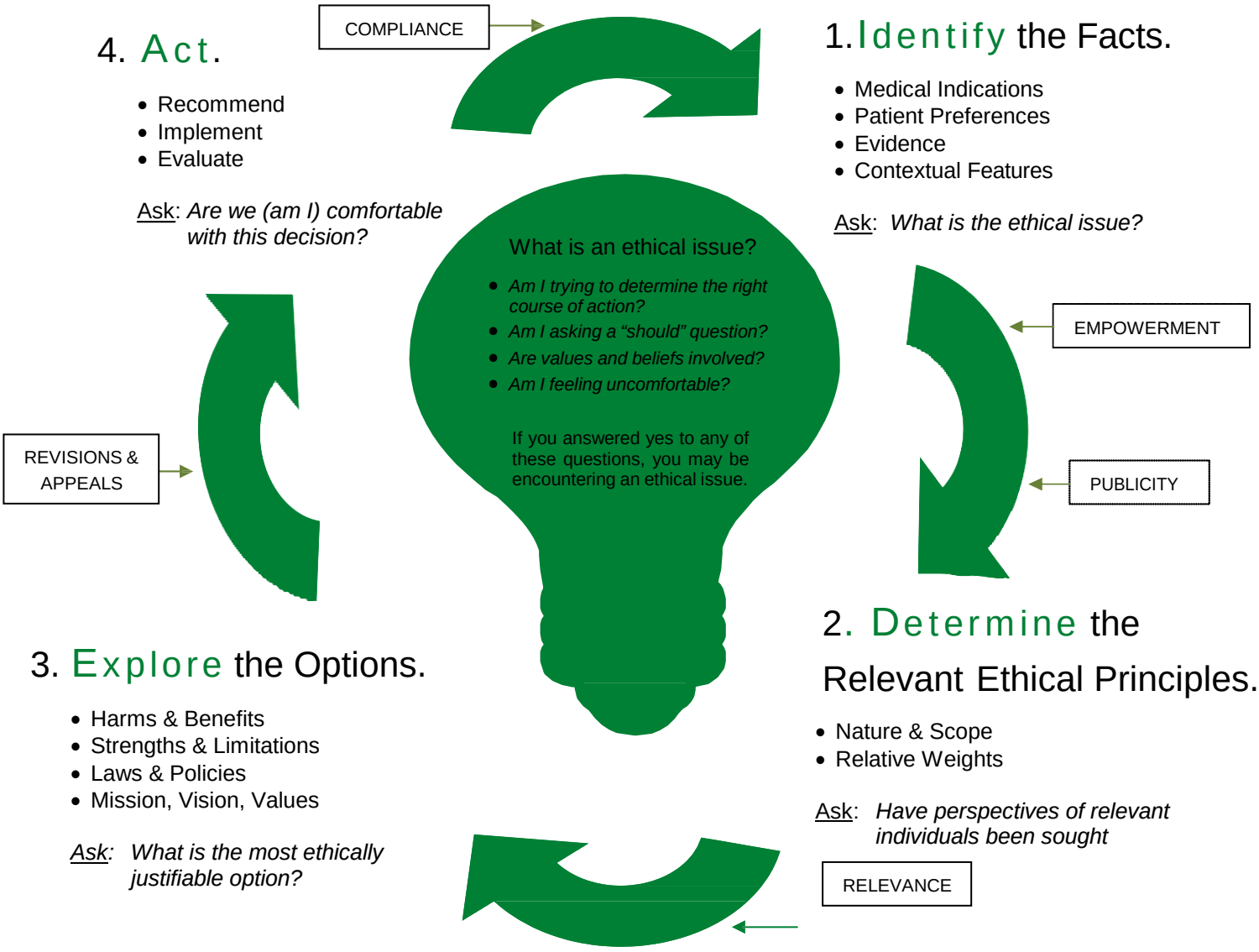
Use of the frameworks can help an individual, team or community to work through an ethical issue. It can help a team or community work together by introducing a shared systematic process, facilitating effective communication, developing a shared language and building a common understanding of how to approach difficult ethical issues.

When organizational decisions are being made in relation to ethics, the Accountability for Reasonableness Framework may be used as a guide for decision-making (see Figure 1).

[2] Definition adapted from Dr. Barbara Secker, Joint Centre for Bioethics, University of Toronto.

IDEA[1]:

Ethical Decision-Making Framework



[1] The IDEA: Ethical Decision-Making Framework builds upon the Toronto Central Community Care Access Centre *Community Ethics Toolkit* (2008), which was based on the work of Jonsen, Seigler, & Winslade (2002); the work of the Core Curriculum Working Group at the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics; and incorporates aspects of the accountability for reasonableness framework developed by Daniels and Sabin (2002) and adapted by Gibson, Martin, & Singer (2005).

The Champlain Centre for Health Care Ethics
Le Centre de bioéthique Champlain

Guideline for the use of the Accountability for Reasonableness (A4R) Framework for Organizational Ethics Issues

The Accountability for Reasonableness Framework (A4R)[1]

In recognizing that not all ethical issues that arise in health care are clinical in nature, an ethical decision-making framework has also been accepted for organizational decision-making. The Accountability for Reasonableness Framework (A4R) is based on the notion of public accountability which requires that reasons and rationales for limit-setting decisions be publically available. The goal of this framework is to ensure that a fair process is available for stakeholders to follow, and expectations are set to consider relevant values in the justification of organizational decisions.

Value	Description
Accountability	There should be mechanisms in place to ensure that ethical decision-making is sustained...
Inclusiveness	Decisions should be made explicitly with stakeholder views in mind and there should be opportunities for stakeholders to be engaged in the decision-making process...
Openness & Transparency	Decisions should be publicly defensible. That means the process by which decisions were made must be open to scrutiny and the basis upon which decisions are made should be publicly accessible to affected stakeholders...
Reasonableness	Decisions should be based on reasons (i.e. evidence, principles, values) that stakeholders can agree are relevant to meeting health needs...and they should be made by people who are credible and accountable.
Responsiveness	There should be opportunities to revisit and revise decisions as new information emerges...as well as mechanisms to address disputes and complaints.

[1] Daniels N. Accountability for Reasonableness. *BMJ* 2000; 321: 1300-1301.