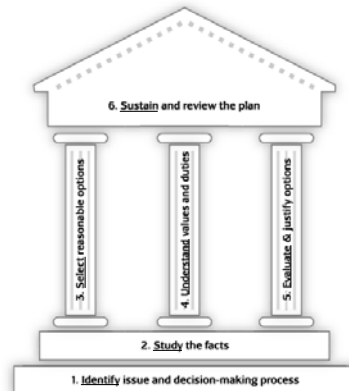


# CLINICAL ETHICS WORKSHEET: ISSUES



This worksheet is designed to help people engage in rigorous ethical decision-making for specific patient cases. Ethical decision-making is not linear; you may have to revisit earlier steps in the process as additional questions arise or facts emerge.

## 1. Identify issue and decision-making process

- Engage in reflective practice: what is your gut reaction?
- State the conflict or dilemma as you currently see it: "Given [state uncertainty or conflict about values], what decisions or actions are ethically justifiable?"
- Determine best process for decision-making and key stakeholders.

## 2. Study the Facts:

Not only the medical facts are important, but also the patient's goals, wishes and perception of quality of life, as well as information about their family, background and organizational issues.

<b>Clinical Issues:</b> <i>History, Diagnosis, Prognosis, Options</i>	<b>Patient &amp; Family Preferences:</b> <i>Long and short term goals, wishes, values</i>
<b>Quality of Life:</b> <i>Patient's view of QoL, benefit, suffering</i>	<b>Contextual Features:</b> <i>Family; cultural &amp; religious beliefs; organizational issues</i>

## 3. Select Reasonable Options:

- What are the realistic alternatives, care plans or treatment options? (look for more than two)

Alt. 1

Alt. 2

Alt. 3

#### 4. Understand Values and Duties:

- What principles, duties and values are relevant to the options (See Part 2 of Ethical Framework)?
- What are the relevant legal requirements and/or professional standards?
- Are key values, duties, principles or standards in conflict?

*Informed Consent; Beneficence & Best Interests; Utility & Justice; Patient- and Family-Centred Care; Therapeutic Relationship; Veracity; HHS Mission, Vision & Values; Confidentiality & Privacy*

#### 5. Evaluate & Justify Options:

- Consider the possible harms and benefits of each option for the patient and other key stakeholders.
- Choose the option with best consequences and alignment with duties, principles and values.
- State clear reasons for your choice; anticipate questions and criticisms.

Alt. 1

Alt. 2

Alt. 3

#### 6. Sustain & Review the Plan:

- Identify how best to implement, communicate and document the decision to patient and key stakeholders.
- Reflect on the decision and the process. What lessons could be learned for future cases?
- Does this situation point to a systems problem (e.g. policy gap)?