

Appendix I – Business Ethical Framework

Circle of Care’s commitment to ethical practice is reflected in the Agency’s Mission, Values, and Vision. These statements form the basis of the agency’s ethical framework and decision-making processes.

Mission

Sinai Health System delivers exceptional care in hospital, community and home, focusing on the health conditions with the greatest impact on the overall health of the population. We discover and translate scientific breakthroughs, develop practical health solutions, educate future clinical and scientific leaders, and lead efforts to eliminate health inequities.

Values

Person-Centred Care: Patients, clients and families are our partners. We plan and deliver care by approaching each individual as a whole person with unique needs. We provide exceptional care and service in a safe and compassionate environment in hospital, community and home.

Excellence: We will be the exemplar of an integrated health system, pursuing the highest standards in care, research and education. Through evidence-based decision making we relentlessly advance the quality of care within our organization and beyond. We recognize and celebrate the contributions of everyone within our community of care.

Accountability: We are accountable to our patients, clients, and families who trust us with their health and a better quality of life and to the public, our funders and donors who trust us with resources to enable our mission. We will earn that trust every day and meet our responsibility with the highest degree of integrity and transparency.

Collaboration: Every part of Sinai Health System works together to provide a seamless system of care. We listen for understanding, communicate openly and learn from each other. We seek and embrace meaningful partnerships that contribute to achieving our vision.

Equity: We ensure an inclusive and respectful culture for all those who seek and provide care. We honour our organizations’ legacies by consistently upholding the rights and needs of the people and communities we serve.

Innovation: We are driven to find better solutions in everything we do. Through discovery, creativity and courage we challenge conventional thinking to gain knowledge and understanding that result in new approaches to care. We seek to understand disease, discover new treatments, and create and teach new care models that will have broad impact on the quality of patient care.

Vision

Canada’s leading integrated health system, pushing boundaries to realize the best health and care from healthy beginnings to healthy aging for people with specialized and complex care needs.

Overview: Ethical Decision-Making Worksheet

The Business Ethical Framework was created to provide an ethically based tool for the governance and leadership of the organization to guide the process of resolving an ethical dilemma. The tool takes into account the facts, emotions, ethical principles, various alternatives and their potential consequences, and an evaluation of the outcomes.

Through its application, the decision-making tool will assist the Leadership to address complex and challenging issues in a comprehensive and logical manner. The decision-making tool can also be used to justify challenging decisions that were made.

Guidelines for Use of the Business Ethical Decision-Making Tool (DAAR)

Step 1: Describe the Situation:

Gather information/facts on the case: the purpose of this section is to identify what is known versus what is not known. It prompts participants to take into account all of the relevant considerations and stakeholders; this often includes facts that may not be evident initially.

Step 2: Analyze the Situation:

Through the process of questioning the ethical issues will be argued and resolved. The 4 areas to be considered are: Clarifying the Decision-Making Process; Understanding Standards of Conduct; Understanding Character & Virtue; and Clarifying Consequences. Identifying the ethical principles in conflict will not provide solutions; however this step will assist in further clarifying and articulating the issues. You may find that there is no ethical dilemma (e.g., that it is purely a legal issue). In this case, the decision-making framework can still be applied to assist with resolution of the issue.

Step 3: Assess Options

Through the use of the decision tree, evaluate each option to ensure that we are maintaining that high level of ethical thinking in each choice that is possible. This will guide the decision to the best possible option.

Step 4: Rationalizations:

Rationalizations are a common pitfall in decision-making. The term refers to the process of convincing oneself that a decision is fair and defensible, when in fact it merely serves one's own interests or offers an easy way out. In these situations, when one is pressed by others about the decision, the reasons may not seem so compelling, even to the one offering the rationalization. There are no foolproof techniques for revealing rationalizations, but the following tests and methods have been used by philosophers and ethicists for some time.

Publicity Test:

Reversibility:

Generalizability:

Ethical Decision-Making Worksheet – Business

D – Describe the Situation

A – Analyze the Situation

A – Assess Options

R – Rationalizations

D – Describe the Situation
What the Key Facts (When, Where, Who, What, Why, How)?
What information is missing? What else do we need to know? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Information confirmed by independent sources/other side ▶ Who else needs to be called? Whom should I include or get input from? Whom formally? Who has the right/deserves to be included?
Are there any other parallel situations that we can learn from?
Who are the stakeholders? Who will be affected by the decision and how? Are people’s rights being honoured?

A – Analyze the Situation
Clarifying the Decision-Making Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Right person(s) to make this decision b) Will the organization back and support the decision? c) Documented organizational guidance/policies/standards/College materials d) What action meets our obligations? e) Does anyone considering the decision have a stake in the decision and aftermath? f) Are there any clear priorities among stakeholder claims? How do we prioritize?
Understanding Standards of Conduct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Would this particular act or practice violate relevant standards of conduct? b) Are there ways to pursue our strategic interests without violating the standards of conduct? c) Does this decision meet legal obligations? d) If the public finds out about this activity, will it lead to action against the agency (e.g. lawsuits)? e) Are the standards of conduct observed within the agency defensible and consistent with the standards of conduct of the society in which it operates?

- f) Does this action violate any human rights?
- g) What action best meets established moral guidelines and common sense (Promise-keeping; respect for others; refraining from lying and cheating; fairness; & maleficence)?

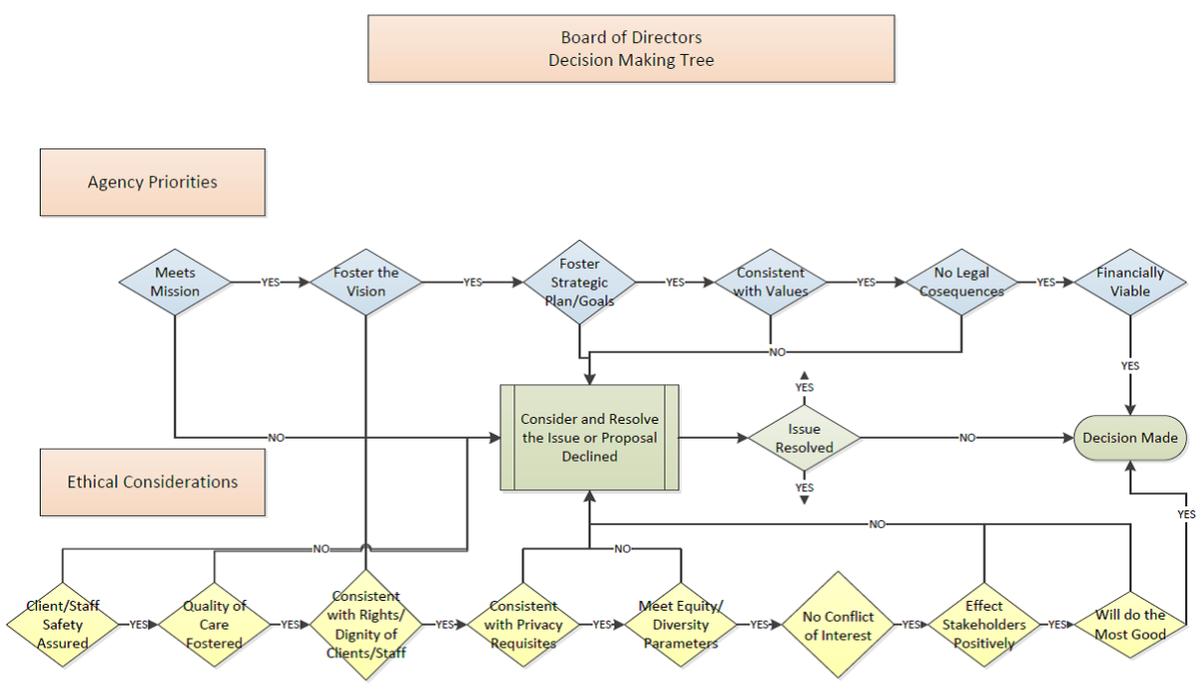
Understanding Character & Virtue:

- a) To what extent do these actions reflect the character traits that the agency espouses?
- b) Are they the basis for excellent organizational performance over time?
- c) Could improvements in how the agency communicates with and treats employees or other stakeholders improve the long-term prospects for the agency?
- d) What decision will allow the organization to live better with others?
- e) Which options are more likely to help me/us sleep at night 6 months and 2 years down the road?

Clarifying Consequences:

- a) Which actions best realize the key purposes of the agency?
- b) Will certain stakeholders be especially harmed? Will they feel negatively toward the agency or seek to hurt the agency?
- c) Will this action be fair to all stakeholders? Is there a conflict of interest for an individual/the agency with this decision?
- d) Will this decision engender a risk to the agency as a whole or to individuals within the agency?
- e) Are there any natural alliances among key stakeholders that can be developed?
- f) Which action is likely to be effective?
- g) Overall, how will the decision affect the agency?

A – Assess the Situation



R – Analyze the Situation

Publicity Test:

Could you defend your choice if it were made public? This test helps to make you scrutinize your reasoning by raising tough questions that might otherwise be avoided. The prospect of having to face public disclosure helps to make people more critical of their assumptions and reasoning. Using this as a hypothetical check can help sort out whether your reasoning is sound and can be justified or is biased and self-serving.

Reversibility:

Could you defend your reasoning if you were on the losing end of your decision? This test helps organizations make decisions that are fair and can be defended in public. It also puts you in the position of the party who will suffer the negative consequences of a decision and asks: Could you agree with and respect the reasons for the decision? The issue is not whether the person approves of the decision. Reversibility instead asks whether the person on the losing end could respect the reasons for the decision.

Generalizability:

Could you defend using this same reasoning in similar cases? This test also raises the issue of consistency and asks whether parties are willing to make a precedent out of their decision. Is the action you are contemplating, and the rationale behind it, something you would think others should do in similar circumstances?

A Decision is Made!