

Ethics at Children's Hospital Colorado

Ethics is the ongoing discussion of important values in health care. The Children's Hospital Ethics Program helps patients, families and team members address complex ethical issues through consultation, teaching, making hospital policy recommendations and research.

Ethics Consultation

- Anyone can ask for an ethics consultation when there are difficult clinical decisions that need to be made and those involved are unsure or disagree about what should be done.
- During an ethics consultation, the ethics consult team makes sure all voices are heard and that the preferences and values of everyone involved are used to create guidelines to help the decision-making process.
- The ethics consult team members are not responsible for decision making. They help guide the conversation, mediate disagreements and support effective communication for those closest to the patient to figure out how to move forward.
- The ethics consult service can be reached through One Call (720-777-3999) 24-hours-a-day, 365 days a year.

When to ask for an Ethics Consultation?

- The best choice for clinical care is not clear
- There are important values causing tensions that are difficult to resolve
- There is disagreement about the plan of care
- There is uncertainty about how and whether to involve teens in decision making
- There is concern about the plan for bringing the patient home from the hospital
- There are requests for care that clash with the standard of care
- The treatment being considered is controversial
- There is mistrust or poor communication

What is the role of the Ethics Consultation team?

- An ethics consult can facilitate a plan of care, assuring that all perspectives, values and preferences are included in decision making
- An ethics consult can clarify the goals of care
- The ethics team will review the chart, meet with the patient, family and clinicians, as appropriate
- The ethics team will place a note in the chart, including ethical reasoning and non-binding recommendations
- The ethics team can offer debriefings for morally difficult situations
- The ethics team can give education for health professionals and community partners

What is the role of families?

- Families are the experts on their child and the values important to them
- Families are essential participants in shared decision making and discussions regarding plan of care
- Families may ask for an ethics consult to support difficult decisions

What is an Ethics Liaison?

- The Children's Hospital Ethics Liaison team is composed of 85 unit-based professionals
- The Ethics Liaisons are skilled in identifying ethical issues and supporting team members involved in ethically complex situations.
- The Ethics Liaisons can connect staff and families with ethics resources available at the hospital

For questions, please contact:



Children's Hospital Colorado

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720-777-1234 | childrenscolorado.org

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Consultation requests:

Anyone can request an ethics consultation at any time, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Patients and families can ask their care team to request an ethics consult on their behalf or they can call the ethics team directly through the One Call operators at: **720-777-3999**