

ETHICS CONSULTATION AND COVID-19

What is an Ethics Consult?

Ethics consultation is available to provide support to all Advocate Aurora Health team members, patients, family members/loved ones, and decision makers who are facing a values conflict in patient care decisions. Ethics consults can help apply ethical decision-making frameworks to balance principles and identify a range of paths forward. Ethics consults provide recommendations for care teams and decision makers to consider implementing in support of an ethical plan of care.

An Ethics Consult Can Help in These Situations:

- Clarify issues regarding decisional capacity, informed consent, and advance directives
- Assist with situations involving significant ethical ambiguity and perplexity
- Confirm ethical principles and policies applicable to the case
- Articulate and prioritize ethically permissible courses of action
- Provide retrospective case review to identify how we can best approach similar future cases
- Assist in resolving disagreement about the plan of care
 - among care providers
 - among patients and their family members/loved ones
 - between care team and patient/family members/loved ones
- Provide recommendations in the following situations for the care team and patient/decision maker to consider
 - ethical aspects of DNR decisions
 - decisions to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment that are not specifically addressed in policies/procedures

Additional Situations Related to COVID-19 Where an Ethics Consult Can Help:

- Assist in applying COVID-19-related policies and processes where there are ethical gray areas
- Assist in identifying possible courses of action when COVID-19 policies or processes appear to be unfair or cause undue suffering
- Assist in analyzing situations where limited resources are constraining options, and it is unclear which route is best (e.g. discharge planning during COVID-19)
- Assist in clarifying duty to care by helping to balance personal and professional obligations

How to Request an Ethics Consult:

- An IP consult to ethics can be placed through EPIC across the system for concerns regarding direct patient care. Ethics consultation requests may also be placed through our SharePoint site:
 - WI: Caregiverconnect > Places > E > Ethics Consultation Request, and complete the form
 - IL: Top Apps > E > Ethics Consultation Request, and complete the form

