An Ethics Consultation: What is it?
An Ethics Consultation can be arranged to provide a confidential forum to discuss complex health care situations.

Some examples of complex health care situations include:
- End-of-life decisions such as tube feedings, pain management and breathing supports;
- Situations that are creating conflicts within families;
- Difficult treatment decisions;
- Situations that are confusing or overwhelming;
- “Do not resuscitate” questions.

Who can request a consultation?
Anyone can make a referral:
- Patients/Residents
- Families
- Health workers

How Do I Request a Consultation?
The Submitter:
- If unable to reach a resolution to identified ethical dilemmas following consultation with other care team members, patient and family, considers the option of submitting the dilemma to the MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee. Advises patient and family that they also have the option to consult with the MCCH Joint Ethics Advisory Committee and provides appropriate information and assistance.
- Contacts one of the MCCH Ethics Advisory Committee representatives to initiate an informal discussion of the situation. This list can also be found on the SFMH & Valley Manor websites.
- Completes a Consultation Request in collaboration with the representative if the decision is made to submit the dilemma to the Committee. Ensures that any urgency to the situation is clearly communicated to the Committee.
- Provides further information as requested by the Committee. Retains the option of speaking directly to the Committee.
- Receives the written Response to Submitter from the Committee which will include recommendations and options. Asks for clarification and guidance from the Committee as required.
- Implements selected recommendation(s) in collaboration with the care team, patient and family.
- Completes an Evaluation—MCCH Joint Ethics Committee Consultation form (optional).

The Ethics Advisory Committee does not make decisions, but rather helps the individuals involved in a difficult situation to examine the issue by considering all perspectives and options. The Ethics Advisory Committee provides support for patients, families and health service providers who are facing ethical questions. The Committee consists of health professionals and community members.

Madawaska Communities Circle of Health (MCCH) is a community integration collaborative with representatives from local health care and community organizations. Its membership works together in a supportive network to enhance the experience of our patients/residents/clients. By working together, we leverage the knowledge and expertise across different sectors of, and improve the access to ethics consultation services.

“Ethical living is the indispensable condition of all that is most worthwhile in the world.”
Ernest Caldecott

Remember, we’re here to help — the final decision is yours.
The purpose is to help you make decisions that are right for you and your loved ones based on the best information available.
The Ethics Advisory Committee is a joint committee. The expectation of the time to resolve an issue is dependent on the nature of the matter. The committee is comprised, at minimum, of the following members:

- St. Francis Memorial Hospital 613-756-3044
- Valley Manor 613-756-2643
- Barry’s Bay & Area Home Support 613-756-2772
- Madawaska Valley Hospice 613-756-3045
- Madawaska Valley Association for Community Living 613-756-3817

**CASE CONSULTATION REQUEST**

Date of Request: ____________________________
Requested by: ______________________________
Department: _______________________________
Purpose of Consultation: _______________________

Urgency of Request:
☐ Urgent—as soon as possible
☐ Somewhat urgent—within 5 days
☐ Not urgent—within 1 month

Recommended participants: ________________________

Will patient, resident and/or family members be invited?  
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Other comments: ______________________________

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**REVIEW OF ETHICAL CASES**

Identify actual or potential problem and the need for ethical advice. Describe the issue on the “Case Consultation Request”

Manager/Supervisor to resolve if possible. Contact an ethics committee member, to initiate an ethical consultation.

Consultation Team of the Ethics Committee (3-4 People) will facilitate discussion with those involved, to explore issues and alternatives.

Broad recommendations will be made to the facility And/or community when appropriate.

The ethical case consultation is discussed at the next Ethics Committee.

The Ethics Chair reports committee minutes to the Boards.

Health care teams can present a case summary to Ethics Committee anytime.

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**WHAT IS ETHICS?**

“Ethics” considers how we ought to live, that is, how we ought to treat others and how we ought to live our own lives. An ethics consultation will help to answer the question “What do I do?” in a particular situation.

Have you had to ask yourself questions such as these?

- As a patient / resident, am I making the best decision for me?
- As a loved one, how will I make the right choices for my family member, if they are no longer able to speak for themselves?
- Will my opinions and values be respected?
- Have I looked at all the options?