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Intercare Corporate Group Inc. - "The Heart of Excellence"



ETHICS... The Right to Refuse and The Right to Choose

Ethics is the process of questioning, discovering and defending our values, principles and purpose. It is about finding out who we are and staying true to that in the face of temptations, challenges and uncertainty.

By way of process, ethics asks us about how we should live, what choices we should make and what makes our lives worth living. It also helps us define the conditions of a good choice and then decide which, of all the options available to us, is the best one.

It is important to remember that every adult (including their representative, where applicable) has the fundamental right to make informed decisions regarding their personal health care - whether that means declining treatment for illnesses or simply choosing not to follow a doctor's orders or directions.

Each of us also has a fundamental right to be informed about our health status; to be involved in our care planning and treatment; and to request or refuse a treatment, therapy or procedure that a health care provider has recommended for us. In keeping with this, caregivers also have an ethical obligation to ensure a resident's/patient's autonomy and right to self-determination is safe-guarded.

Individuals may refuse medical treatment for a variety of reasons. It may be that they disagree with the course of action; fear possible outcomes or believe that the risks do not outweigh possible benefits; have religious, cultural, familial, or financial concerns related to the proposed treatment; and/or their current level of emotional distress is affecting their ability to make a decision.

Psychological factors and communication problems/issues have been found to be the primary and secondary reasons for medical treatment refusal, respectively. When a resident/patient is refusing treatment, it is important to ascertain (understand) the reason behind such refusal. In doing so, we become better positioned to help mitigate/address complexities and determine the best course of action.



INTERCARE ETHICS FRAMEWORK

Is this an Ethical Concern?

Questions to ask:

- ♦ Is it hard to figure out the "best" choice?
- Are you asking questions about what you "should do"?
- Are values and beliefs involved?
- Are you feeling uncomfortable?
- Are there multiple factors or conflicting views impacting the situation?

If you answered "YES" to any of the questions above, you may be facing an 'Ethical Concern'.

ETHICS: Making The "Decision"

ASK: What is the Ethical Concern?

1. Gather the Facts

- Who is involved?
- What is the Resident's preference?
- Are there medical issues?
- What does the family / decision-maker want?
- Are there policies to consider?
- How does this affect everyone else?

4. Act and Evaluate

- Have all the options been carefully considered?
- If the plan had to be explained to someone else, what would they say?
- Take action, evaluate the outcome(s) and make adjustments as needed

Ethical
Concerns
can be challenging.
If you need support,
please contact a
supervisor.

2. Identify values and potential conflicts

- What are the values (Intercare core values or personal values)?
- Are there values in conflict? Which ones?
- What are important factors to consider and why?

3. Think about Options

- Which option(s) will do the most good and least harm?
- Which option(s) consider the rights and values of everyone involved?