

Our Commitment to Ethical Integrity

Our Commitment to Ethical Integrity is more than a statement—it is a promise... We promise to create a culture that will allow our staff, physicians and volunteers to flourish, knowing we are making decisions and setting standards of behaviour that are directed to support those we serve and each other.



How you want to be treated.

Providence Health Care Expectations

Our Commitment to Ethical Integrity represents our commitment to each other and the people we serve. As a standard, it reinforces that as a member of the PHC community, we are each accountable to live these standards and create the ethical culture that represents the best of our individual and collective wisdom, generosity and moral courage.

Creating our Providence Health Care culture begins with the Board of Directors commitment to ethical integrity. The expectation of the Board as outlined in this statement applies to all who work, practice, or volunteer within Providence Health Care.

How We Ought to Act in Light of Who We Say We Are

Ethics permeates everything we do at Providence Health Care—from our approach to serving patients and residents to how we make decisions about allocating resources. Guided by a rich ethical tradition rooted in the values of the Founding Congregations of Sisters and the Catholic Church, the *Health Ethics Guide* provides a foundational document in all our ethical decision-making. These values shape how we interact with each person, respect the rich diversity of cultures, faiths and traditions of those we serve, including those with whom we work. Within the context of ethics, the PHC value of *integrity* is especially important. The value compels us to align what we say is important with what we do.

As board, staff, physicians and volunteers it is our responsibility to demonstrate integrity in all our behaviours, attitudes and decisions and gives credibility to our motto:

“How you want to be treated.”

Lead by our Mission, Vision & Values

Our Mission

Providence Health Care is a Catholic health care community that respects the sacredness of all aspects of life. Inspired by the healing ministry of Jesus Christ, our staff, physicians and volunteers are dedicated to service and to the support of one another. In this environment of service, support and respect, we meet the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of those served through compassionate care, teaching and research.

Our Vision

We will continue to grow as a community, regional and academic health science enterprise that is a recognized leader, and major player, in the provision of health care within British Columbia. We will be respected for our care and services, known for our Mission and Values, acknowledged for the contributions of our teachers and researchers.

We will actualize our Vision by being an organization of caring hearts, creative souls, and resourceful actions.

Spirituality – We nurture the God-given creativity, love and compassion that dwells within us all.

Integrity – We build our relationships on honesty, justice and fairness.

Stewardship – We share accountability for the well-being of our community.

Trust – We behave in ways that generate trust and build confidence.

Excellence – We achieve excellence through learning and continuous improvement.

Respect – We respect the diversity, dignity and interdependence of all persons.

Grounded in the Health Ethics Guide

Our commitment to ethical integrity is grounded in the *Health Ethics Guide* that is published by the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada and is approved by the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops. It is our primary resource for ethical reflection and decision-making.

All clinical and administrative leaders are expected to inform their decision-making through critical reflection and application of the *Health Ethics Guide*, and to promote its use throughout our programs and services.

Spirituality

We are expected to:

- **Integrate our care of body, mind and soul for each other and all those we serve.**

We will uphold and respect the intrinsic dignity of all persons, from conception to natural death

- **Keep the people we serve at the centre of all we do**

We will keep before us the statement “How I want to be treated” in all our dealings with the people we serve and each other.

- **Weigh clinical benefits and burdens**

We will respect a person’s free and informed decision to forgo or stop treatment when the burdens are disproportionate to the benefits hoped for or obtained

Respect

We are expected to:

- **Treat people with respect**

We will conduct ourselves through respectful behaviour, speech, and attitude in all our interactions with others

- **Seek to resolve and diffuse conflict**

We will work through conflict directly with one another in a respectful manner

- **Honour diversity**

We will honour the different cultures, traditions, faiths and beliefs of those we serve and promote inclusive practices

Excellence

We are expected to:

- **Lead through innovation in research, teaching and exceptional care**

We will learn from our successes and mis-steps, turning our knowledge into best practices

- **Be inquisitive**

We will promote a culture of discovery, learning and continuous quality improvement

- **Promote an ethical culture**

We will seek to ensure resources are available to promote sound decision-making by all.

Trust

We are expected to:

- **Mitigate and manage conflict of interest**

We will declare conflicts of interest and abide by legal, legislative and ethical conduct in all our business dealings

- **Take responsibility**

We will take responsibility for our decisions and actions by following through on our projects and commitments.

- **Uphold confidentiality**

We will instill an environment of trust by safeguarding the privacy of personal information and upholding confidentiality, respecting all necessary legislative requirements

Integrity

We are expected to:

■ **Resolve complaints**

We will resolve complaints and address quality, safety and patient/resident issues to improve our service.

■ **Mitigate incidents of moral distress**

We will support our staff in discerning ethical options in major decision-making to honour and preserve personal integrity

■ **Cooperate with partners**

We will work with others to achieve the greatest good, including proactive steps to mediate and resolve conflict

Stewardship

We are expected to:

■ **Make responsible resource allocation choices**

We will guide our resource allocation decisions by our mission, values and strategic directions

■ **Promote environmental stewardship**

We will support recycling, energy conservation and other green initiatives

■ **Create processes for raising and addressing ethical concerns.**

We will respond to legitimate concerns regarding systemic practices that impact the mission, values, ethical framework and the legacy of the Founding Sisters that may hurt the credibility of PHC.

The Responsibility of Everyone

Daily, each of us makes ethical decisions. Therefore, every person has a role in shaping the ethical culture of PHC. *Our Commitment to Ethical Integrity* calls us to promote ethical behaviour and to resolve ethical conflict with people directly and respectfully. Just as we recognize most clinical ethical issues are resolved at the bedside, so are other issues of ethical conflict in the organization resolved closest to the level in which it occurs. This is known as the principle of *subsidiarity*.

When we can work out conflict directly, we instill greater ownership in creating our desired ethical culture. While sometimes outside expert opinion is required to clarify what constitutes an ethical course of action, subsidiarity affirms that we are all moral agents, and can positively influence the ethical culture through our behaviour, attitudes and decisions.

Our promise

PHC's Commitment to Ethical Integrity is more than a code of conduct—it is a hope-filled promise. Since 1894 through the legacy of the Founding Congregations of Sisters rooted in the Catholic health care tradition, we continue to create a rich culture of upholding the highest clinical standards to ensure patients and residents are at the centre of everything we do. We promise to create a culture that will allow our board, staff, physicians and volunteers to flourish, knowing we are making decisions and setting standards of behaviour that are directed to support those we serve and each other.

Organizational integrity doesn't just happen. Achieving and maintaining it requires sustained attention and ongoing efforts. It is hard work...To the extent that who the organization claims to be is not expressed in what it does in its daily activities, there is something lacking at its core. It lacks "wholeness."

Ron Hamel, Ph.D Health Progress, Dec. 2006

Resources

Several resources are available to support discussions on ethics, the Providence Health Care values and the ethical decision-making process:

Health Ethics Guide

The current *Health Ethics Guide* is available on-line at:
http://www.chac.ca/resources/ethics/ethicsguide_e.php

Ethics at Providence

This brochure, which identifies steps in ethical decision-making, is available via Ethics Services.

Ethics Services at PHC: To arrange a consult

604-806-8851 (Office)

604-817-4219 (Cell)

http://www.providencehealthcare.org/ethics_services/

As well, a number of training and educational resources are available to further enhance and instill Providence Health Care mission, values and ethical traditions into our operational processes:

- Annual 4-day Health Ethics Seminar
- Yearly Ethics Conference
- Noon-time events like “Brown Bay lunches” and “Ethics 4 Lunch”
- Diversity Workshops
- Values in Action-Mission Services
- Workshops sponsored by Mission Services
- Leadership and team development programs
- Performance evaluations and action plans
- Root cause analyses
- Ethical decision-making frameworks
- Quality improvement infrastructure and committees
- Internal audit and financial reviews
- Clinical and organizational ethics consults

For more information, please go to the internal intranet for these various services.