

CONTACT US

**You can reach us
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DIFFICULT DECISIONS

**How Ethics Services
Can Help You**

This material has been
reviewed and approved by
patients, families and staff.



**Information for patients,
clients, residents and families**

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

If you are struggling with choices about your own care, or that of someone you love, the ethicists at Providence Health Care Ethics Services can help.

Ethics is about doing the right thing. By this we mean what is right for you and your loved ones. Health care ethics is a profession that considers ideas about what we in health care ought to do, and how we should behave when caring for patients, residents, and their families – people like you.

Clinical ethicists have advanced education in health care ethics. We work with PHC and PL patients, residents, clients, families, and care teams to look at difficult situations.

We help you and your care team reach decisions about what is right for you and your loved ones.

We do this by helping you think about your values. Values are expressions of what is important to you. These values influence your health care decisions. For example, you might choose to live with more pain so that you are not sleepy from medications and can talk with your family.

Your health care team also has their own values and professional principles. For example, they will not offer treatment unless it will help you.

We can help you and your health care team make treatment and care plans based on the values that are most important to you.

We do not make decisions for you. Making decisions is up to you and your health care team.

When would you use Ethics Services?

There are many situations when you might find it helpful to talk with an ethicist.

These are some examples:

- **When you are not sure what is the right choice for you or a loved one.**

Mom has been sick a long time. We need to decide on treatments. What should I think about?

I feel sick and don't know if I want any more chemotherapy. Should I stop?

- **When you and your care team have different ideas about what values are important and what goals are possible.**

How can I be sure my wishes about my health care will be respected?

The care team says that I shouldn't feed my husband certain foods because he chokes and might get pneumonia. Don't I get to decide what is best for him?

I don't know if I agree with my Mom's doctors about whether to put a feeding tube in. How should I bring this up?

- **When your loved one cannot make their own health care decisions and you must help.**

My son has mental health problems and won't take his medications. Can I force him to? Can the doctors?

My sister and I don't agree about whether Dad should go to a nursing home. Who can decide?

If you think we can help, please contact us.

