

Improving Ethics Quality in Health Care

IntegratedEthics® Staff Survey

Summer 2014



VA
HEALTH
CARE | Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

Veterans
Health
Administration | National Center for
ETHICS
in Health Care

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

This survey asks for your views of ethics in your work environment and your facility's support for ethics. The data collected will be used to improve the work environment in your facility and throughout the Veterans Health Administration.

The survey is completely confidential and anonymity is protected throughout the process. To protect your anonymity, data will never be reported for any group when there are less than 10 employees who responded to the survey from that group. It is not possible to link individuals with their responses. Completing the survey is entirely voluntary, but your help in responding to the survey is very important. By voicing your opinion you can help to make changes in your facility and throughout VHA.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please read each question carefully **and choose the answer that best matches how you think or feel.**

Respond to the questions based on your perceptions and experiences at your current VHA facility. We want your input based on what you know or believe. You do not have to have complete knowledge of all activities at your facility to provide important, useful information.

Most respondents take less than 30 minutes to complete the entire survey.

For Multiple-Choice Questions:

Click one answer for each question. Sample Question:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

To select the response "Agree" as your answer, you would simply click on "Agree" as shown above.

When you have completed the survey, click on "Submit" to send your answers directly to an outside vendor's confidential survey system. **Please complete the survey only once.**

Note: For some questions, only an abbreviated version of the question is included here due to a licensing agreement with the Ethics Resource Center for questions that are copyrighted. These questions are indicated by a diamond (♦). The full versions of the questions were used in the administration of the survey.

YOUR WORK IN VHA

Please do not begin the survey until you have completed the next three questions about your work in VHA. Answering these questions will determine which sections of the survey apply to your work. To protect your anonymity, data will never be reported for any group when there are less than 10 employees who responded to the survey from a group.

Please complete the following questions regarding your role in VHA.

B1. Does your work in VHA involve direct patient care (e.g., as a physician, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, psychologist, chaplain, social worker, resident, fellow, counseling staff, rehabilitation therapist, respiratory therapist, nutritionist)?

- Yes → *If yes, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA), then the items for Clinical Staff (sections DM, P, and E), and then background items.*
- No → *If no, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA) and then the background items.*

B1a. What percentage of your clinical time do you spend providing care for dying patients?

- 0 → *If respondents select "0", they will not see section E and will continue on through the remainder of the questions for those involved in direct patient care.*
- 1-20
- 21-40
- 41-60 → *If respondents select "1-100", they should see section E, and then continue on through the remainder of the questions for those involved in direct patient care.*
- 61-80
- 80-100

B2. Does your work in VHA involve administrative or service operations such as Revenue, Fiscal, Health Information Management (HIM), Logistics, or Compliance and Business Integrity (CBI) functions (e.g., patient registration, eligibility, billing, coding, accounts receivable, utilization review, MCCR/MCCF, budget, purchasing and contracting, auditing, monitoring, or compliance)?

- Yes → *If yes, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, and M), then items for Compliance and Business Integrity (section CB), then remaining all staff items (sections G and RA), and then the background items.*
- No → *If no, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA) and then the background items.*

B3. Does your work in VHA involve research (e.g., conduct of research, managerial or administrative responsibility for research, research oversight, or service on a research related committee or group)? For these purposes, count as research activities only studies that have been approved as VA research by a VA Research and Development Committee.

- Yes → *If yes, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA), then the research items (section R), and then the background items.*
 - No → *If no respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA) and then the background items.*
-

DEFINITIONS

Please use the following definition when answering questions referring to these terms.

Ethics: what is right or what should be done.

Ethical concern: uncertainty or conflict about values.

Facility: the physical location where you work.

- For most, your facility is a **VA Medical Center**. If you work at a medical center with multiple divisions, your facility is the particular campus where you work.
- If you work at a **CBOC**, your facility is the **parent VA Medical Center**.
- If you work in a **VISN office**, your facility is the **VISN office**.
- If you work in **Central Office**, your facility is **Central Office**.
- If you work in a **virtual department or offsite**, your facility is the one where your **department is based or that you report to**.

Manager: an individual who has administrative authority for a unit, department, service line, or entire facility. Managers include senior managers (e.g., medical center director, chief nurse executive), middle managers (e.g., associate chiefs, service line managers) and first line managers (e.g., unit supervisors, team leaders), all of whom are responsible for making policy, fiscal, or operational decisions.

Senior Manager/Executive:

- Those in executive positions who supervise managers.
- If you work at a **VA Medical Center**, your senior managers are the leadership team, typically consisting of the Director, Associate Director, Chief of Staff, and Chief Nurse or Executive/Associate Director for Nursing or Patient Care Services.
- If you work in a **VISN office**, your senior managers include the Network Director, Deputy Network Director, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Logistics Officer, and Quality Management Officer.
- If you work in **Central Office**, your senior managers are the Under Secretary, Deputy Under Secretary, and Chief Officers.

Supervisor: first line supervisor; typically those who are responsible for employees' performance appraisals and approval of their leave.

Team Leader: those who lead a team of employees but who may not be responsible for employees' performance appraisals or approval of their leave.

Human Subjects: individuals (including Veterans, VA employees, and others) who are enrolled in a research study or whose private information is used for a research study (sometimes referred to as "research participants" or "study participants").

Respond to the survey questions **based on your perceptions and experiences** at your current VHA facility.

Your answers in this survey are anonymous. It is not possible to link individuals with their responses.

BEGIN THE SURVEY

A. Please select your facility. (Drop down list of VHA facilities)

B. What is your occupation? (Drop down list of VHA occupation codes)

Which one of the following best describes the service or area where you do the majority of your work?
(Check only one.) This question is only asked of employees who indicate that they work at a facility.

(Check only one)

Non-Clinical

- 1 Contracting
- 2 Facilities Management
- 3 Fiscal
- 4 Human Resources
- 5 Information Technology
- 6 Law Enforcement
- 7 Other Non-Clinical

Clinical

- 8 Administrative – Clinical
 - 9 Dental
 - 10 Geriatrics and Extended Care
 - 11 Imaging (Radiology, Nuclear Medicine)
 - 12 Laboratory Medicine and Pathology
 - 13 Medical and Subspecialty Care
 - 14 Mental Health
 - 15 Pharmacy
 - 16 Prosthetics or Sensory Aids
 - 17 Rehabilitation Medicine
 - 18 Research
 - 19 Spinal Cord Injury
 - 20 Surgery, Anesthesiology, or Surgical Specialty Care
 - 88 Other Clinical Service
-

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN THE EVERYDAY WORKPLACE

At this facility:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
W1	Employees are treated fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W2	Managers follow up on ethical concerns that are reported by employees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W3 ♦	Trust management to keep promises and commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W4	Employees can talk with managers about ethical concerns without fear of retaliation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W5	I am familiar with my facility's ethics consultation service, a service to help patients, providers, and staff resolve ethical concerns in the health care setting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
W6	If I needed help with an ethical concern related to health care, I would be likely to contact my facility's ethics consultation service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less Than Monthly	Never
W7	In the past 12 months, how often have you experienced distress because there is a difference between what you think is the right thing to do and what you or others are asked to do?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PATIENT PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

At this facility:

		Yes	No
PC1	During the past 12 months, have you heard private information about a patient discussed within earshot of others who are not involved in that patient's care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PC2	During the past 12 months, have you observed notes or papers with identifiable patient information left in areas where they might be viewed by patients, family, or non-treating staff members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

At this facility:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
M1	Managers communicate to staff how and why important decisions are made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M2	Managers communicate that ethics is a priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M3	During the past 12 months, I received "mixed messages" (i.e., conflicting messages) from managers that caused ethical uncertainty or ethical concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M4	Managers raise and discuss ethical issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that the following groups in your organization would be held accountable if caught violating VHA policies or the law:					
M5a ♦	Senior and mid-level managers held accountable if caught violating VHA policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M5b ♦	Non-management employees held accountable if caught violating VHA policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M5c ♦	My direct supervisor held accountable if caught violating VHA policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COMPLIANCE AND BUSINESS INTEGRITY

At this facility:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
CB1 ♦	Advice seeking from organizational resources if faced with a difficult decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB2 ♦	Senior and mid-level managers held accountable if caught violating VHA business and fiscal policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB3 ♦	Non-management employees held accountable if caught violating VHA business and fiscal policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB4 ♦	My direct supervisor held accountable if caught violating VHA business and fiscal policies or the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
					Yes	No
CB5 ♦	Pressure to compromise standards of ethical workplace conduct				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB6 ♦	Observed conduct that violated the law or organization's standards of ethical conduct				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB6a ♦	Reported observation of misconduct				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES

At this facility:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
G1	If I needed advice on government ethics issues, I would be likely to seek guidance from General Counsel or Regional Counsel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
					Yes	No
G2 ♦	Observed conduct that violated government ethics rules or laws				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G2a ♦	Reported observation of misconduct				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION

At this facility:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
RA1	Local resource allocation decisions are consistent with the mission and values of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RA2	Managers communicate the reasoning behind local resource allocation decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CD1. Where do you perform the majority of your patient care activities?

CD1-Location of Patient Care Activities		(Check only one)
1	Inpatient: ICU	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Inpatient: Acute Care Hospital Non ICU	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Inpatient: other	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Outpatient: CBOC	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Outpatient: Hospital-based Clinic	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Outpatient: Readjustment Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Outpatient: other	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Extended Care: Community Living Centers (CLC)-Nursing Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Extended Care: Home Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Extended Care: Mental Health-Residential	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Extended Care: other	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Emergency Care: Urgent Care, Emergency Department	<input type="checkbox"/>
88	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN RESEARCH

Percentage Time

1-20 21-40 41-60 61-80 81-100

B3a What percentage of your time do you spend on research?

B3b What is your primary role in research? **Check only one**

Investigator (e.g., principal investigator, co-principal investigator, associate investigator)

Administrative staff (e.g., Administrative Officer, Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development, IRB staff)

Project director and manager

Other scientific support staff (e.g., biomedical technician, laboratory or clinical study coordinator, research assistant, statistician, animal care staff, IT professional)

Post-doctoral fellow

R&D Committee and subcommittee member (e.g., IRB member)

Other (please specify)_____

B3c Does your work involve research with human subjects? **Yes** **No**

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
If I needed help with an ethical concern related to research, I would be likely to contact my:						
R1a	Facility's ethics consultation service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1b	Office of Research and Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1c	Office of Research Oversight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1d	Local Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Central IRB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1e	Research Compliance Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1f	Office of General Counsel (OGC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
R2	Rate your facility on how well it provides you with clear guidance on avoiding activities or relationships (including personal, academic, or financial) that could call into question the integrity of research.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

		Yes	No
R3	During the past 12 months, did you ever feel pressured to compromise federal regulations, VHA policy, or ethical standards related to research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FACILITY RATING

		Not at all Ethical										Exceptionally Ethical
D1	How would you rate your facility as an ethical organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is your level of supervisory responsibility?

- 1 None
- 2 Team leader
- 3 First line supervisor
- 4 Manager
- 5 Senior manager/executive

What is your gender?

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

What is your age?

- 1 Less than 20 years old
- 2 20-29
- 3 30-39
- 4 40-49
- 5 50-59
- 6 60 years or older

Yes No

Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?

What is your race? (Mark one or more)

- 1 White
- 2 Black or African American
- 3 American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 4 Asian
- 5 Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

How long have you been with VA?

- 1 Less than six months
- 2 Between six months and one year
- 3 Between one and two years
- 4 Between two and five years
- 5 Between five and ten years
- 6 Between ten and fifteen years
- 7 Between fifteen and twenty years
- 8 More than twenty years

Yes No

Have you ever served on active duty in the United States armed forces, either in the regular military or in a National Guard or military reserve unit?

Thank you for participating in the Summer Voice of VA – IntegratedEthics® Staff Survey.

Your input is very important. Have a nice day.