

Improving Ethics Quality in Health Care

IntegratedEthics™ Staff Survey

Summer 2012



VA
HEALTH
CARE | Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

Privacy Act Statement:

In accordance with Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974), providing the personal information asked in this survey is completely voluntary. Collection of this information is requested to allow the Department of Veterans Affairs, and its subdivisions, to assess employees' perceptions and level of satisfaction with their work environment. Sections 1302, 3301, and 3304 of Title 5, US Code authorize collection of this information. **Completed surveys will be returned directly to an outside vendor for tabulation. All information you provide about your job and about yourself will be treated confidentially.** The information you provide will be compiled, analyzed, and reported for the whole population and certain subgroups. Future disclosures may involve releases of statistical data and other non-identifying data for the improvement of employee work environments and associated administrative purposes. **No identifiable, individual responses will be reported or revealed.**

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.

1. 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 to Item 1, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA), then the items for Clinical Staff (sections DM, P, E, and items CD1 and CD2), and then background items (section D).*

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

2. 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 to item 2, 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 (section D).*

If yes to items 1 and 2, respondents should see the questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, and M), then items for Compliance and Business Integrity (section CB), then all staff items (sections G and RA), then the items for Clinical Staff (sections DM, P, E, and items CD1 and CD2), and then the background items (section D).

No → *If no to item 2, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA) and then the background items (section D).*

3. 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 to item 3, 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 (section D).

If yes to items 1 and 3, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA), then the items for Clinical Staff (sections DM, P, E, and items CD1 and CD2), then the research items (section R), and then the background items (section D).

If yes to items 1, 2, and 3, respondents should see all items including the questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, and M), then items for Compliance and Business Integrity (section CB), then all staff items (sections G and RA), then the items for Clinical Staff (sections DM, P, E, and items CD1 and CD2), then the research items (section R), and then the background items (section D).

- No → If no to item 3, respondents should see questions identified for all staff (sections W, PC, M, G, and RA) and then the background items (section D).
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DEFINITIONS

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

Ethics: what is right or what should be done.

Ethics 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)

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. I am reluctant to raise ethical concerns.	<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"/>

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.	Employees can talk with supervisors about ethical concerns without fear of having their comments held against them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M2.♦	Management does not tolerate retaliation for reporting a potential violation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M3.	Senior managers communicate that ethics is a priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M4.	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"/>
M5.	Managers raise and discuss ethical issues.	<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.♦	Likely to seek guidance from Compliance and Business Integrity Officer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CB2.♦	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.♦	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 business/fiscal standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CB6.♦	Observed violations of business/fiscal standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
CB6a.♦	Reported observation of misconduct.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES

		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:		Almost Never	Occasionally	About Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Do Not Know
RA1.	How often does the focus on controlling costs come at the expense of providing quality patient care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RA2.	How often does management communicate the reasoning behind local resource allocation decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	
RA3.	Rate your understanding of your facility's decision-making process for allocating resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

CLINICAL STAFF SECTIONS

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

CD1-Location of Patient Care Activities (Check only one)

- 1 Inpt: ICU
- 2 Inpt: Acute Care Hosp Non ICU
- 3 Inpt: other
- 4 Outpt: CBOC
- 5 Outpt: Hospital-based clinic
- 6 Outpt: Readjustment Counseling
- 7 Outpt: other
- 8 Extended Care: CLCs-Nursing Facilities
- 9 Extended Care: Home Care
- 10 Extended Care: Mental Health-Residential
- 11 Extended Care: other
- 88 Other: (please specify):

CD2. Which one of the following best describes your service or clinical area?

(Check only one)

- 1 Medical and Subspecialty Care
 - Geriatric and Extended Care/Rehabilitation
 - 2 Medicine
 - 3 Mental Health
 - 4 Surgical and Anesthesia
 - 5 Administration
 - 88 Other (please specify):
-

SHARED DECISION MAKING WITH PATIENTS

For all questions in this section, assume that patients have decision-making capacity unless otherwise noted.

At this facility:		Almost Never	Occasionally	About Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Do Not Know
DM1.	How often do clinicians give patients sufficient time to discuss treatment recommendations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DM2.	How often are surrogate decision makers promptly identified for patients who lack decision-making capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Do Not Know
DM3.	Rate clinicians at your facility on how effective they are at integrating a patient's values and preferences into health care recommendations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DM4.	Rate clinicians at your facility on how well they help patients prepare advance directives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROFESSIONALISM IN PATIENT CARE

At this facility:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
P1.	If a medical error caused harm, the error would be disclosed to the patient or surrogate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P2.	I am reluctant to raise concerns when I think a colleague's clinical abilities are impaired.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P3.	If a clinician displays intimidating, abusive, or disruptive behavior toward others, managers will intervene.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
P4.	Rate your facility on how well it provides you with clear guidance on how to maintain professional boundaries in your relationships with patients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
P5.	Rate clinicians at your facility on how well they treat patients who practice undesirable behaviors (e.g., drug abuse, non-compliance) with the same amount of respect as other patients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
						Do Not Know
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN END-OF-LIFE CARE

		Percentage Time					
		0	1-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100
B1a.	What percentage of your clinical time do you spend providing care for dying patients?	<input type="checkbox"/>					

		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
E1.	Rate your facility on how well it educates you about ethical issues in end-of-life care.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

At this facility:		Almost Never	Occasionally	About Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Do Not Know
E2.	When clinicians think that CPR would be medically futile but the surrogate wants everything done to prolong life, how often do clinicians write DNAR (do-not-attempt-resuscitation) orders?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
E3.	How often do clinicians discuss CPR with patients without discussing overall goals of care?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
E4.	How often do clinicians place feeding tubes in patients near the end of life without presenting the option to forego artificial nutrition?	<input type="checkbox"/>					

ETHICAL PRACTICES IN RESEARCH

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

		Percentage Time					
		0	1-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100
		<input type="checkbox"/>					

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)_____

		Yes	No
B3c.	Does your work involve research with human subjects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
R1.	If I needed help with an ethical concern related to research, 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"/>	
		Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Do Not Know
R2.	Rate researchers at your facility on how well they avoid activities or relationships (including personal, academic, or financial) that could call into question the integrity of their research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
R3.	Rate researchers at your facility on how well they describe a research study to human subjects in a way they can understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
						Yes	No
R4.	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		
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
D1.	How would you rate your facility as an ethical organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>												

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

D7. **What is your level of supervisory responsibility?**

- None
- Team leader
- First line supervisor
- Manager
- Senior manager/executive

D2. **What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female

D3. **What is your age?**

- Less than 20 years old
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 years or older

	Yes	No
D4. Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D5. **What is your race? (Select all that apply)**

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

D6. How long have you been with VA?

Less than six months

Between six months and one year

Between one and two years

Between two and five years

Between five and ten years

Between ten and fifteen years

Between fifteen and twenty years

More than twenty years

B4. 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?

Yes

No

**Thank you for participating in the Summer Voice of VA - IntegratedEthics™ Staff Survey.
Your input is very important. Have a nice day.**