

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ETHICS IN HEALTH CARE

Healthcare ethics is the discipline that helps Veterans, caregivers, and employees deal with situations in which the right thing to do may be complicated or unclear. The National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC) guides patients, families, and clinical care teams in making the most ethically sound healthcare decisions for Veterans to inform ethically strong practices across VA.

Providing value to Veterans and their loved ones...

NCEHC promotes strong, Veteran-centered ethics practices by eliciting, documenting, and respecting Veterans' preferences and goals of care and actively involving patients in decisions about their health care. Working with local facility healthcare ethics services, NCEHC helps apply ethics thinking to real-life situations:

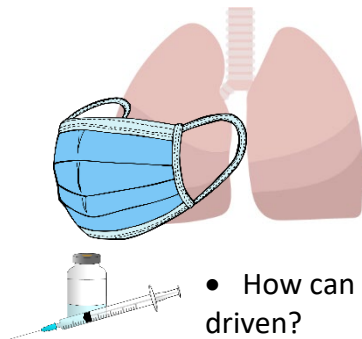
- Who will make healthcare decisions for me when I cannot speak for myself?
- How do I make sure that my dad's healthcare team follows the wishes he expressed in his advance directive?



Providing value to employees...

NCEHC promotes the education and training of competent ethics consultants to facilitate discussion of emotionally charged or morally challenging clinical situations. NCEHC also provides ethics policy resources and education to help facility staff maintain focus on Veterans' goals for their health care and incorporate strong ethics practices into their delivery of care. The goal is to reduce staff turnover and moral distress and empower staff to take positive actions to improve patient care.

- My patient is dying, but his family cannot accept it. What can we as his healthcare team do to help?
- A Veteran in our care is refusing a medication she really needs – can we hide it in her food?



Providing value to VA...

NCEHC helps VA navigate the gauntlet of complex decisions that we face as a healthcare system:

- How should VA allocate resources when our system may not have enough (e.g., ventilators, vaccine, personal protective equipment)?
- How can VA support staff to provide ethically-informed patient care that is mission driven?

Respect. Trust. Compassion. Support values-focused care. Reach out to your local healthcare ethics service for help!



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
National Center for Ethics in Health Care

Questions? Contact us at VHAethics@va.gov