

## **Introduction**

Consistent with the mission, vision, and values of Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital, an Ethics Committee is available to provide ethics consultations as a free service to patients and their families, as well as Marianjoy associates.

In keeping with the Ethical and Religious Directives, the Marianjoy Ethics Committee is committed to responding, in an advisory capacity, to help address difficult treatment issues and decisions. The Marianjoy Ethics Committee strives to foster an environment of ethical awareness and issue resolution through education, policy review, and the development of consultation skills.

## **What is Healthcare Ethics?**

There are times when patients, their families, and healthcare professionals confront difficult issues regarding medical treatments that involve personal preferences, moral principles, religious beliefs, or professional guidelines.

The purpose of healthcare ethics is to provide thoughtful exploration of how to respond to difficult healthcare decisions and make morally good choices based on beliefs and values regarding issues such as life, health, medical care, and end-of-life considerations.

## **For more information:**

To request ethics assistance or a formal ethics consultation, contact a member of your Marianjoy healthcare team. To reach the co-chairpersons of the Marianjoy Ethics Committee, contact Patty Roberts at 630-909-8460 or Larisa Lahey at 630-909-8909.

The members of the Marianjoy Ethics Committee include the following:

Larisa Lahey, Ethics Co-Chair  
Case Manager – Lead,  
Admissions and Case Management

Patty Roberts, Ethics Co-Chair  
Director, Spiritual Care

Linda A. Bronersky, Vice President, Ethics  
WFSI Corporate

Stacy Berendt, Case Manager, Admissions

Pam Diewald, RN, Nursing

Roy D'Silva, Director, Accounting and  
Reimbursement, Finance

Terri Fetter, Physical Therapy

Mary Frost, Clinical Nutrition

Mary Keen, MD, Medical Director, Pediatrics

Denise LeBloch, Vice President, Marketing,  
Executive Director, Foundation,  
Sr. Leadership Ethics Committee Liaison

Peg Lorden, Nursing Supervisor, MMG

Sachin Mehta, MD, Medical Director, Brain Injury

Mary Oleszek, Speech Therapy

Yamini Patel, Occupational Therapy

Robert Riley, Guest Services Supervisor

Leslie Rogers, PhD, Psychologist

Mira Shah, Physical Therapy

Nancy Szymd, Director, HIS/Risk Management



**MARIANJOY**

Rehabilitation Hospital

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare

# The Marianjoy *Ethics* *Committee* and Difficult Healthcare Issues

## **What are Some Common Ethical Questions?**

Generally, ethical issues arise when the right thing to do is not clear or when people disagree about what is best for a person who is disabled or ill. Examples of common ethical questions include:

- What should family members and healthcare professionals do if a patient refuses treatment that promises to be helpful?
- Who should make healthcare decisions for patients when they are unable to communicate or decide for themselves?
- What should patients do when they do not understand what professionals are saying or feel they are not offered the opportunity to participate in their own healthcare decisions?

## **What is the Ethics Committee?**

The Marianjoy Ethics Committee is available to help patients, their families, and Marianjoy associates identify, understand, and, if possible, resolve difficult healthcare ethics questions. The committee is made up of professionals who bring a broad range of backgrounds and expertise to the ethical process. The committee includes physicians, nurses, chaplains, therapists, case managers, psychologists, accountants, risk managers, dietitians, patient advocates, administrators, and others.

## **How Do You Request Ethics Assistance or an Ethics Consultation?**

Patients, their family members, and Marianjoy associates may request assistance, guidance, and information about an ethical issue. To do so, simply inform a member of the healthcare team, who will notify the Ethics Committee and request assistance or a formal consultation.

## **What Happens After Ethics Assistance is Requested?**

It is important to note that an ethics consultation is an advisory service. This means that ethics professionals will offer advice but will not make a decision regarding the issue. Patients, their family members, and professionals remain responsible for their own decision making. Upon request, the Ethics Committee will convene a group of individuals to conduct an ethics consultation during which they will gather facts, ask specific questions, and listen carefully to the issues presented.

During this process, options are often clarified and recommendations may be made regarding the ethical issue. When applicable, Marianjoy policies are reviewed and clarified if they apply to the particular situation. Often, a meeting of all those closely involved in the situation will lead to the discovery of new insights or alternative options.

## **Are Ethics Consultations Confidential or Legally Binding?**

Ethics deliberations are strictly confidential. An ethics consultation is not legally binding for patients, their families, and professionals.

## **What Other Services Does the Ethics Committee Provide?**

The Marianjoy Ethics Committee meets regularly to present case studies regarding patient-care issues, evaluate policies, and provide skill development.

The Committee:

- Participates in developing and reviewing institutional policies when healthcare ethics issues are involved.
- Provides education programs annually on ethics issues for healthcare professionals.
- Provides ethical consultations upon request, utilizing a framework for discussing ethical issues.

