



## **Ethics Committee**

### **Terms of Reference**

Definition of Stakeholder: In this document, the term ‘stakeholder’ refers to clients, family members, employees, volunteers, students, other healthcare professionals and other involved community members.

### **Mandate:**

The Ethics Committee shall serve as a resource for CMHA BHN regarding client related ethical dilemmas and the Agency’s ethical responsibilities. The Ethics Committee shall regularly review and develop education, policy, performance improvement, and consultation as it relates to ethics.

The committee’s authority and purpose is described in the Ethics Framework and Policy documents.

### **Tasks:**

- Review and provide recommendations, as required, to management regarding agency policy and procedure compliance with Accreditation Canada standards related to ethics
- To provide a supportive, consultative, & advisory forum whereby the agency may effectively address ethical dilemmas identified by stakeholders
- Review and make recommendations to management regarding the development of the agency’s ethics framework, policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines within the defined mandate of the committee
- Review reported ethical dilemmas and recommend action towards resolution that improves the quality of care and services delivered
- Abide by the Mission, Vision, Values, Mandate, and the Strategic Plan of the Agency
- Ensure and review mechanisms for stakeholders to identify and report perceived or actual ethical dilemma
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of deliberations within the Ethics Committee. All members of the Ethics Committee will be required to sign the CMHA BHN Confidentiality Statement.
- Review, promote and recommend continuing education related to ethics for all stakeholders
- Review the Agency’s Ethics Standards (as defined by the Accreditation body and known ethics best practice) and provide feedback and recommendations to management related to agency compliance
- Complete an annual ethics committee report to the Quality Improvement Committee (QIC);
  - Complete the work plan
  - Review the Agency’s Code of Ethics
  - Identify overall strengths and weaknesses of the committee’s functioning

- Recommend strategies to address gaps
- Establish and monitor Committee size and membership to ensure effective functionality

### **Membership of Ethics Committee**

The committee will include a minimum of five (5) members consisting of

- The Executive Director and/or designated Manager(s) - mandatory
- Staff members representing various CMHA BHN programs, including but not limited to a minimum of three (3) 'front-line' direct service provision employees; effort will be made to balance representation between Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk sites when possible
- One or more stakeholders preferably with an ethics background and/or interest, which could include at least one client or family member
- The Committee will choose and/or elect a Chair from the body of the committee members. Committee membership, including the Chair position, will be reviewed by the committee every two years. Sitting members will have the option to remain involved for up to 4 years unless the committee determines otherwise. The committee recognizes the benefit of rotating membership, while maintaining a core of experienced members, where possible.

### **Addressing Committee Related Issues:**

Any concerns from a committee member or members relating to an issue, decision or process of the Ethics Committee, should be discussed at an Ethics Committee Meeting or involve the entire Ethics Committee Membership. If this is not a viable option from the perspective of the committee member, then a private discussion with the Chair of the committee may be arranged. Where possible, the Chair will respect the confidentiality of such private discussions, but the issue(s) may require further consultation with the Ethics Committee members, or the Committee itself, to resolve the issue(s) at the discretion of the Chair.

### **Reporting & Accountability**

Reporting and Accountability is outlined in the CMHA BHN Ethics Framework, Policy, and Procedures documents.

### **Meeting Frequency:**

The Committee will meet a minimum of three (3) times annually, as well as ad-hoc as required (ie: requested consultation on unresolved issues or a large number of issues requiring review).