Legacy’s Clinical Ethics Program

Making health care decisions for yourself or for your family can sometimes be hard. Some choices are made more difficult when there are a variety of opinions, values and backgrounds to consider.

Our Clinical Ethics Program can help, working with patients, family members, doctors and hospital staff when health care decision-making becomes a challenge.

Our group is made up of ethics consultants, health care and non-health care staff and members of the community trained to help address ethical dilemmas that happen during the care of patients.

Our team also trains others and gives feedback about Legacy policies.

Clinical ethics consultation service

The clinical ethics consultation service is a free resource to help with communication and education about ethical issues and clinical decision-making. Legacy’s ethics consultants volunteer their time and skills.

There are many types of ethical issues that come up in the care of patients. Most times, the attending and/or consulting doctors can handle them. And, our team can help when there is uncertainty or conflict of values, either in the inpatient setting or the outpatient clinics.

We promote patient care through dignity, respect and dialogue. An ethics consultant gives non-binding advice after an ethical analysis of the situation.

We can help

- Make clear who should make health care choices when a patient is not able
- Teach how health care choices are made and how to weigh the issues using Legacy rules and state laws
- Explore patient and family preferences along with legal, cultural and spiritual considerations in decision-making while promoting respect for everyone’s wishes, beliefs and values
- Work with the care team to choose the right decision-making responsibilities for those who are unrepresented
- Help with communication between patients, families, doctors and care team members and address disagreements in the care plan when there is uncertainty or conflict in values.
- Raise awareness about patient rights, informed consent, confidentiality, POLST and advanced directives.
- Reduce moral distress among health care staff

Access to help

Anyone (patient, family member, health care team member) can ask for an ethics consultation by calling the numbers below and asking for the ethics consultant on-call.
Ethics consultants are on call 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Some of our hospitals have extended evening and weekend hours for ethics consultations. We aim to return the call within one business day. We cannot guarantee response to urgent or same-day requests.

- Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, pager: 503-938-0028 (24-hours-a-day)
- Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, 503-413-7711
- Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center, 503-692-1212 (ask for nursing supervisor)
- Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center, 503-674-1122
- Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center, 360-487-1000
- Legacy Silverton Medical Center, 503-873-1500
- Legacy Hospice Services, 503-413-7711
- Randall Children’s Hospital, 503-413-2200 (24-hours-a-day, ask for Pediatric Ethics Service)
- Unity Center for Behavioral Health, pager: 503-938-0028