University of Missouri Hospitals and Clinics The Staff for life	**Subject:** **Ethics Committee Function**	**Number** **I-A-03a**
	Department/Function **Ethics, Rights and Responsibilities**	**Reviewed / Revised** **01-12-04**

OBJECTIVE: To provide a focus for discussion of policy, education, and clinical situations that present difficult ethical problems to clinicians, patients, families, and the health care organization. The CEC provides a forum for discussion and review of individual cases, policy, and educational opportunities for the schools of medicine, nursing, and the health professions.

POLICY: The Clinical Ethics Committee (CEC) reviews and recommends relevant hospital policies, participates in ethics training and education, and reviews clinical ethical problems through discussion and analysis of consultations done by the Ethics Consult Service (ECS). The ECS facilitates the decision making processes of the family and health care team when ethical dilemmas arise, and reports their activities to the CEC.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Membership consists of but is not limited to physicians, nurses, the chief nurse executive, a nurse representative from the School of Nursing, a medical ethicist, a lay person, a chaplain, a social worker, a psychologist and an attorney.

- The committee also serves as an educational resource to the school of medicine, the school of nursing, the school of health professions, and affiliated organizations.

- The Committee members may also serve on the ethics consult service for which the committee reviews individual cases on a regular basis.

- Attending physician and other health care providers directly associated with specific patient situations, as well as patients and families, may attend a meeting of the committee if requested or recommended following an ethics consultation.

PROCEDURE:

Responsibility

Staff Members

- All staff and employees of University of Missouri Health Care are welcome to submit concerns to the CEC. When submitting a concern they should provide information to the Department Manager about the ethical issues that need to be discussed or reviewed by the committee.
- Attend the CEC meetings that pertain to the issues they have offered for discussion, or when their input is requested.

Service Manager

- Prepare the agenda for the meetings and keep minutes of each committee meeting that will be filed in the management office.
- Notify committee members and other selected individuals of scheduled meeting times and the agenda for each meeting.
- Selectively invite patients/families, members of the health care team, and other relevant persons when clinical cases are discussed by the committee.
- Maintain accurate files and records of meetings, ethics consults, members, and correspondence that is relevant to the committee activities.
- Assist the committee members and chairpersons in the work and activities of the committee.
- Maintain the Ethics Consult Service Call Roster.
- Be available during normal work hours to coordinate clinical ethics consultations meetings.
- Coordinate communication and joint activities with other committees (in particular the Patient Rights Committee, and the Palliative Care Committee).

CEC Members

- Attend meetings and participate in discussions about ethics consultants and other ethical issues related to the care of patients, the functioning of the health care organization, and its staff.
- Participate in the discussion, writing and review of pertinent staff and institutional policy.
- Participate in the education and training of committee members, hospital staff, faculty, students, and trainees.
- Assist in identifying resolution options for ethical issues at the individual, institutional, and community level.
- Be available to the ethics consult service for selected case consultation and review. (The Ethics Call Roster is available through Telecommunications).

REFERENCES:

Nursing Generic Structure Standards
Medical Staff Bylaws, Rules and Regulations
Article V: Ethics and Ethical Relationships
Hospital Policy # I-A-06, “Patient Rights and Responsibilities”