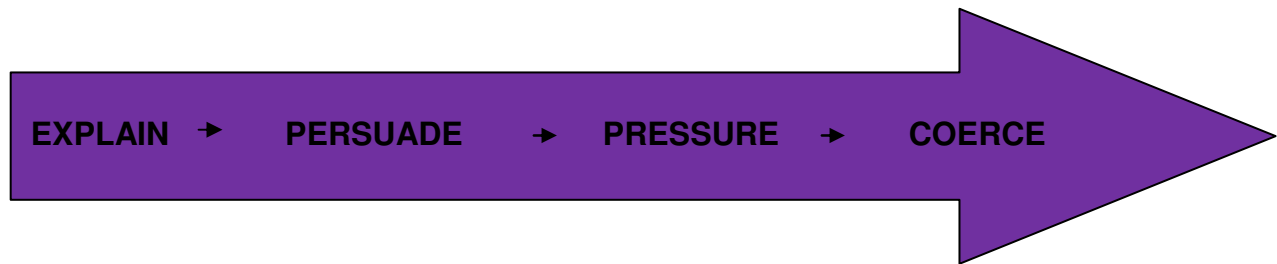




Applying ethical principles and approaches to risk situations						
Probability of Risk & Harm	Client's Competency	Mental illness / mental competency	Client's Emotional state	Undue influence	Access to Information	Interference HOW MUCH WE Interfere
Tolerable: not permanent or serious or probable	Client can understand and tolerate	None ↓ Mild	Absence of disturbance	Absent	Full	Explain ↓ Persuade
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Pressure ↓ Physically coerce
Intolerable: permanent & serious & probable	Not understand	Significant	Seriously impairing	Seriously impairing	None	

Tolerable risk: the risk is not probable or harm not serious/ permanent, and the client is competent, mentally and emotionally stable, there is no undue influence, and there is free access to information (see **the upper end of scales**) - then the staff's interference (intervention) should be: **EXPLAIN / PERSUADE**

Intolerable risk: the harm is probable with serious and permanent consequences, and the client is deemed incompetent and / or incapacitated by mental illness / emotional state, there is undue influence, and limited / none information (see **the lower end of the scale**) - then the interference (intervention) should be: **PRESSURE / COERCE**



Interfere only if the interference is:

- ❖ Effective
- ❖ Benefits are greater than harms
- ❖ The mildness/ non-invasive possible
- ❖ Non-discriminatory



Assessing Degree of Urgency for Interference

LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY OF HARM				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Rare	Slight	Slight	Tolerable	Moderate	Critical
Unlikely	Slight	Tolerable	Moderate	Substantial	Critical
Possible	Tolerable	Tolerable	Substantial	Critical	Critical
Likely	Tolerable	Tolerable	Substantial	Critical	Critical
Certain	Tolerable	Substantial	Critical	Critical	Critical

Likelihood: the probability of an adverse event if the issue / risk is not rectified	
Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances
Unlikely	May occur at some time but has not yet occurred
Possible	Might occur at some time and has occurred in the past
Likely	Will probably occur in most circumstances
Certain	Is expected to occur

Severity of harm: the gravity of the adverse event, should it in fact happen	
Insignificant	Negligible / insignificant harm; may require further monitoring
Minor	Slight / minor harm requiring preventive intervention and ongoing monitoring
Moderate	Temporary harm / decline requiring intervention and safety precautions
Major	Major harm requiring intensive interventions and safety measures
Extreme	Harm that could result in severe outcomes / death requiring immediate and decisive interference

Urgency of interference: timing and degree of interference required	
Slight:	No action is required
Tolerable:	Monitoring and ongoing evaluation required re incidents, changes in situation. Interventions to reduce risk to the lowest lever possible required.
Moderate:	Protective actions / interventions required through ongoing negotiations / persuasion. Monitoring for increased risk required.
Substantial:	Actions / interventions required (i.e. safety agreement, safety precautions, enhanced staffing, etc). Monitoring for ongoing risk required.
Critical:	Immediate decisive interference / interventions required to avoid harm (i.e. hospitalization). Constant monitoring required.



COAST
MENTAL HEALTH

Coast Mental Health Ethics Committee

Ethical Case Review Process using Risk Assessment Approaches

1. Thoroughly review situation / study the case before formal review meeting.
2. Gather input from all participants using the “Ethics Quadrant” format (client preferences, quality of life, health issues, contextual issues); document.
3. What is the main issue related to the case study. If there are more than one issue, identify them.
4. Identify the values, beliefs, biases that influence how the participants view the case / situation. Write them down on the flipchart.
5. Identify ethical principles related to the risk issue at hand (autonomy, veracity, fidelity, beneficence, non-maleficence); write them down and refer to them frequently.
6. Review the risk assessment related to the client / issue. Generate risk related information based on risk assessment tools used at Coast
 - a. Clarify the concept of tolerable and intolerable risk
 - b. Facilitate group discussion on key risks: What risks are tolerable? What risks are intolerable?
 - c. Obtain consensus amongst everyone about the risk outcomes
7. Formulate the key ethical problems / dilemma that are relevant in this situation.
8. Identify all options available to address the situation. Write out ALL OPTIONS including invasive and non-invasive approaches.
9. What is the least invasive approach that will address the situation? Utilize the graph: “Applying ethical principles to risk assessment” to determine where the client falls into each area.
10. Formulate the decision / recommendation.
11. Determine next steps / plan for follow up.
12. Create a backup plan.



Ethical Decision Making – Four Quadrant Approach

<p style="text-align: center;">Client health related issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the central clinical considerations?• What are the health related needs? What can be done?• What is the accepted standard of care for this client?• What are possible outcomes (risks and benefits) related to interventions?• What are possible consequences of not implementing interventions?	<p style="text-align: center;">Quality of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What kind of life the client will have with and without intervention?• What is the degree of distress?• Whose definition of quality of life?• What does the risk assessment indicate?
<p style="text-align: center;">Client preferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does the client want?• What are the client's values and goals?• Do culture, beliefs and ethnicity influence / play role in risk management?• What is the client's decision-making capability? Is the client competent or incompetent? (If the client is competent their preferences are playing a significant role)• Has the client been well informed of all potential risks and benefits?• If applicable, what are the surrogate's opinions / wishes and how do they reflect the client's best interest?• What are the preferences of health care providers? Do they reflect the best interest of the client?	<p style="text-align: center;">Contextual features / external considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who else is involved and affected?• Who is at risk? What input do they have?• Who else should / needs to be involved?• Are there other sources of bias such as age, race, noncompliance, social situation, personality issues?• What organizational policies and practices are involved / impacted?• What are legal implications? What does the law say?• What and whose values are in conflict? Prioritize the ethical values that are in conflict.• What are the costs (financial, time, energy)?

Ethical Decision Making re Risk – Flow Chart

STEP 1: Define the problem and recognize the possible conflict between two or more values or ideas

Put aside your biases or assumptions. Do not jump into conclusions, clarify assumptions and gather all information required
Identify the ethical principle involved. Always consider ethical principles or virtues (what a good person / professional would do / be expected to do?)
How will trust be build during the process?

STEP 2: Gather the facts / information: four quadrant approach

What is the central concern? Then proceed with fact-finding related to the issue:
Client health related issues
Client preferences
Quality of life
Contextual features / external considerations

STEP 3: Identify risks, degree of risk and urgency

What is the basis for the evaluation of risk at this time? What has changed in the client's life?
How severe is the risk? Will the risk significantly affect the client's quality of life? Safety? What is the risk to harm others?
Is the client aware of consequences?
How imminent is the risk? Is the client able to negotiate / mitigate negative consequences?

STEP 4: Identify possible solutions and feasible actions

Brainstorm all possible solutions / actions; consider doing nothing
Evaluate consequences of all solutions / actions presented
Weigh the benefits and the burdens of the decision
Do options reflect the client's preferences?

STEP 5: Analyze possible solutions using ethical references

Ethical principles: respect, justice, desire to do good (beneficence), avoidance of doing harm (non-maleficence), virtue
Other ethical references: policies, legal precedents, code of ethics. Personal / professional judgment
Analogous case: how similar cases have been resolved before?
What are the least invasive solutions?

STEP 6: Propose and test possible solutions

What would be the best alternative for ALL concerned? What would have to change your mind?
What is the balance of good and evil? What would minimize the harm? What would a virtuous person/ professional do?
What if everybody in similar situation do this?
How does the decision reflect the organization's / professional values ?

STEP 7: Select the solution and establish action plan

Define the final decision / solution
Define action steps in chronological order
Present the plan to the client and all involved; make changes if an agreement cannot be reached. Document
Determine evaluation time-line; schedule next meeting

STEP 8: Evaluate the plan and reflect on lessons learned

Evaluate the expected outcome
Reflect on the impact of the decision on all concerned. Any recommendations for practice change / for policy change?
Establish timeframe to evaluate the outcome