

*More than 400 researchers and practitioners from more than 30 countries contributed to this guide

Embedding new norms

Clinical practice is complex - we must expect ethical dilemmas to emerge.

ARE ETHICAL NORMS PART OF PRACTICE AT MY WORKPLACE?

Ethical dilemmas are not limited to a specific point in time and may not fit neatly into ethics regulations. Policies and practices need to reflect this.

Things change as the clinical contact unfolds, which requires ongoing alertness and attention to emerging ethical challenges. Anticipating challenges helps us notice when things take an unexpected turn. Each dilemma we face is likely to be multi-layered and to require collaboration to find the best solution.

Clinicians are encouraged to speak up when confronted with ethical challenges and to reach out and seek support from peers in the global clinical village. We must expect the reporting of changes and challenges within the clinical contact and actively support solution-finding.

Robust ethics processes must have both a regulatory and a support component. Accountability for complex contexts should include:

- Regular clinical and peer supervision
- A process for reporting on, and sharing, challenges encountered and solutions reached (for both enhanced accountability and to promote a culture of learning)



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Enabling ethical solutions in complex clinical settings

Ethical solutions are:

- designed to enhance the safety and wellbeing of our clients
- designed to maintain the safety and wellbeing of clinicians
- contextually responsive
- designed to encourage social equity and thriving, sustainable communities
- found in many places
- built on shared humanitarian and communitarian values
- designed to take the whole clinical journey into account, including legacy effects
- aligned with essential principles and relevant regulation
- enabled through collaboration, reflective practice and openness to innovation
- mindful of the impact of power differentials on clinical agendas, processes and reporting
- supported by institutional processes and ongoing support
- may require that we (and our clients and service partners) are prepared to 'take the long road'.

Ethical decision making in complex clinical setting is not:

- simply adopting and following a standardised process or rigid procedure
- a 'one time' action
- driven primarily by funding decisions or political agendas
- conducted in isolation from our clients, or the communities – clinical intervention should not be imposed.



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An Ethical Clinical Journey

Clinical practice in complex contexts present unique challenges. Best practice in one setting may not suit in another. This can lead to ethical dilemmas throughout the clinical journey.

In cross-cultural contexts, engagement with, and trust of, health and mental health services is impacted by: understanding of cultural needs, culturally relevant interventions and availability of ethnically diverse staff.

The aim of this toolkit and pocket guide is to:

- Contribute to the global movement for ethical decolonised practice among global partners in healthcare; and
- Improve access to tools to support practice in national health systems, NGOs and in private practice

What will enable sustained ethical action in clinical practice?

Clinical practice ethics is about day-to-day decision making and action in all aspects of clinical services and especially during client contact.

To help us identify and address ethical challenges, we have mapped a network of influences that form interdependent threads that weave through all stages of the clinical practice journey:

- Place:** physical, political, cultural and historical aspects of place
- People:** clients, practitioners, colleagues, community stakeholders
- Principles:** ethical and legal regulations that should guide practice
- Precedents:** past practices – successful and unsuccessful

Reflecting on each of these 4 P's can illuminate ethical challenges as well as help us locate potential solutions.

Clinical work impacts lives. Ethical global practice is compassionate, adaptable and accountable in equal measure.

Ethical challenges are not always obvious and finding solutions can be challenging. Partnerships can be strengthened when this work is undertaken together.

There is often more than one ethical solution to the same problem. Sometimes it is a question of choosing 'the most ethical, albeit, imperfect, option, for now'.

Both challenges and solutions exist in a dynamic interplay – what works this time may not work next time – our solutions need to be responsive to unfolding circumstances.

Openness to new ideas can drive innovation at unexpected moments. Often creative solutions can be ethical solutions

INSIDE: Infographic
BACK COVER: Embedding the new norms in our practice and institutions

An Ethical Clinical Journey

Strengthening how we work in complex and fragile settings to enable ethical actions and outcomes.

Ethical considerations are relevant at every stage of a clinical journey.

The clinical practice journey is long and often arduous in complex contexts. Ethical challenges may emerge at any stage, from the referral to the legacy that remains long after the clinical contact has been completed.

HOW DO I CONTRIBUTE TO ETHICAL ACTION? WHAT IS MY PLAN?

This tool is designed to support reflection on the ethical challenges that we may face at each stage. Note the clinical practice journey is neither linear nor predictable. The order of stages can be different. Revisiting previous stages is often required

The four Ps

Interconnected Threads

Where ethical challenges and dilemmas emerge. Where solutions can be found.

These interdependent threads weave through all stages of the clinical relationship. To understand dilemmas and find ethical solutions, we need to reflect on these strands in multi-dimensional ways.

PLACE

What will work in this context?

PEOPLE

Who will help us bring our best and draw in the support we need?

PRINCIPLES

What worldview and values will best guide us?

PRECEDENT

What do we need to follow or challenge in established ways of working?

Culture Of The Clinical Setting

Each of us is shaped by a particular worldview in the institution/community where we are based, and also the institution in which we were trained.

In what ways could the professional culture of this clinical service create helpful opportunities or unhelpful tensions to the successful conduct of this service?

Monitoring & Adapting

The evidence that we gather provides an ethical imperative to re-affirm or revise our case formulation, and in turn, our clinical pathway.

Have we demonstrated commitment to reflective practice, review, and reformulation with this client? How do we select valid tools?

Creating A Therapeutic Environment

A therapeutic environment is key to strong and positive clinical outcomes. It creates an ethical foundation for collaborative clinical engagement during times of distress and vulnerability.

Are we prioritising a trusting and non-judgmental climate for our clinical work?

Creating A Therapeutic Relationship

Successful clinical work involves a respectful partnership between client and clinical service team.

How can we create a therapeutic relationship with the client where there are cultural differences?

Case Formulation

Being open to hearing the client's story is key to ensuring that our assessment is comprehensive, contextual and well targeted.

In what ways could this assessment process lead to incorrect formulations?

Therapy / Intervention

The strongest intervention will reflect the needs of this particular client in this particular context.

In what ways could client and clinicians cultural background influence what makes a successful therapeutic intervention?

Ending The Intervention Planned And Unplanned

Engaging positively with endings, however they occur, can be an important contribution to therapeutic outcomes

How can we ensure that the ending of clinical contact is an affirming and strengthening experience?

Maintenance Of Relationship With Client(s)

Expecting fluctuations in this relationship enables us to address them openly when they occur.

Is our relationship with our client developing in positive ways in response to the collaborative work being undertaken?

Relationship With Other Stakeholders

What will help us establish and sustain a collaborative culture in our engagement with significant others?

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Legacy Effects Of Intervention

We always need to consider the long-term impact of any clinical contact – both for client and clinician.

What are the critical steps in ensuring clinical interventions can be successfully translated into the lives of our clients?

Guiding Principles and Values

A compass to guide ethical action – especially in complex clinical situations.



DO NO HARM

Harm can occur through clinical action and inaction. Recognise the gravity and ethical implications of clinical choices. Act to prevent harm.

ENABLE FLOURISHING

Enable necessary and urgently needed change to support our clients to be their best selves and engage positively with their world. Be an advocate for the importance of mental health and wellbeing for strong communities.

CONNECT : PEOPLE AND PLANET FIRST

Invest in relationships – recognise they are the heart of clinical practice – listen carefully, be trustworthy, transparent and accountable, and behave honourably

BE AWARE BE BRAVE BE SAFE

Be able to identify and respond vigilantly to ethical challenges, being alert to safety considerations for client, clinician and community

INVEST IN OUR OWN

LEARNING Be self-aware and actively strengthen interpersonal skills and reflective practice

CONTEXT AND COMPASSION

Always work in a contextually responsive, compassionate way

COMMITMENT

Be reflective, accountable and persistent when faced with ethical challenges.