

**SUMMARY ETHICS DISCUSSION GUIDE:  
Balancing the Duty to Provide Care *and* the Duty to Provide a Safe Work  
Environment**

**Note: This summary version is designed as a supplementary tool for groups who already have an ethics framework and are comfortable with the use of such tools.**

**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**1. Identify your baseline understandings/assumptions (as individuals and as a group).**

- What is your understanding of the "duty to provide care"?
- How do you understand the "duty to provide a safe work environment"?
- Is this dilemma an individual provider/health team or an organizational issue, or both?

**2. Clarify the issue(s), i.e., what is the nature of the dilemma/concern as it relates to these two duties?**

- What is it about this situation that brings the "duty to provide care" to mind? The "duty to provide a safe work environment"?
- What exactly is the conflict or tension between the two duties in this situation?

**3. Consider who needs to be involved and what their perspectives are, i.e., who are the stakeholders?**

- Who is accountable for making the decision?
- What key values are involved? For example:
  - Duty to provide care - urgency/need for care, vulnerability/risk for harm, respect for autonomy, justice, professionalism, reciprocal obligations, confidentiality/privacy, duty to warn/disclose
  - Duty to provide a safe work environment - good governance, truth-telling, respect for autonomy, justice, vulnerability/risk for harm, duty to warn/disclose

**4. What is known about this issue/situation?**

- Are you aware of any information or resources that might be relevant to the "duty to provide care" and/or the "duty to provide a safe work environment"? i.e., policies, legislation, professional codes, etc.?

**5. Reflect and contemplate**

***The following table is provided to help you track your thoughts concerning key values associated with each of the duties as well as the stakeholder perspectives.***

<b>Stakeholder perspective</b>	<b>Duty to Care</b>	<b>Duty to provide Safe Work Environment</b>

**6. Make a decision**

- Is this decision setting a precedent or establishing a change in practice related to the duty to provide care and/or the duty to provide a safe work environment?

**7. Move forward**

- Were any broad policy or organizational issues raised that warrant further investigation or that need to be shared or followed up with others in the health care organization?
- Were any gaps identified related to practices or policies concerning the duty to provide care or the duty to provide a safe work environment? If so, how will you address these gaps and/or make appropriate individuals/groups aware of them?