A Framework for Ethical Decision-making

The principles below are derived from those provided in *"10 Ethical Principles in Geriatrics and Long-Term Care".* Our group developed a matrix to use when deliberating over tough decisions on the basis of ethical principles. These principles can be adapted for use in long term care communities. Using the elder's well-being as the guiding star provides a framework regarding how principles can be weighed.

Guiding star: Well-being of the Elder

Beneficence – do right

Non-maleficence - do no harm

Futility of Treatment – informed about consequences

Confidentiality – must be absolute

Autonomy – choice with consequences

Physician-Patient relationship – fidelity and confidentiality

Truth-telling - honest communication as fundamental

Justice

Non-abandonment

Limited resources

Utilitarianism – being absolute

Fairness or uniformity in approach

Dignity – avoiding surplus safety and excess disability

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