



WHEN DON'T I NEED TO ACCESS THE ETHICS COMMITTEE?

Most quality improvement projects and clinical audits do not require Ethics Committee approval. If you are uncertain, please refer to the Senior Quality Resource Manager, Director of Clinical Services, or Director of Nursing.

Any clinical or management matter which raises ethical questions, but which is satisfactorily resolved amongst caregivers, does not require input from the Ethics Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the St John of God Healthcare Ethics Committee for sharing with us their "Guide for caregivers", from which we have adapted many of the sections for this guide.

OTHER REFERENCES

Mission, Values, Philosophy and Ethical Directives of Mount Alvernia Hospital

Human Organ Transplant Act (HOTA) 2004, Ministry of Health, Singapore

Ethical Guidelines on Research Involving Human Subjects (National Medical Ethics Committee, September 1997)

Singapore Guideline for Good Clinical Practice (SGGCP) 1 October 1999, Ministry of Health, Singapore

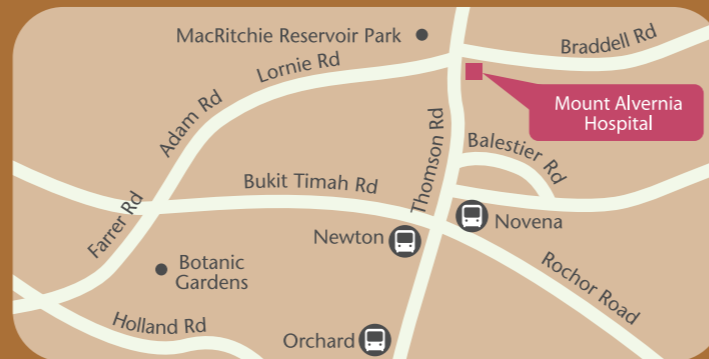
Copyright © 2009 Mount Alvernia Hospital, Singapore



ETHICS COMMITTEE A GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS

OUR LOCATION

Conveniently located in central Singapore, Mount Alvernia Hospital is only 10 minutes away from the world-famous Orchard Road shopping belt where many hotels are located; and 20 minutes drive from Changi International Airport. If you are coming by subway, there is a free bus service from the Novena MRT Station to the hospital.



Mount Alvernia Hospital is a general acute care hospital committed to delivering value-for-money, quality healthcare. Since our founding by Catholic missionaries in 1961, we have evolved with the growing needs of public healthcare and developed multi-disciplinary medical expertise to cater to a wide range of medical conditions. *We Serve All With Love.*

For more information or to inquire about our services, please contact us at:
Tel: (65) 6347 6688 Fax: 6255 6303 Email: enquiry@mtalvernia-hospital.org

Mount Alvernia Hospital
820 Thomson Road, Singapore 574623
www.mtalvernia-hospital.org

Information in this brochure is updated as at the time of printing (Oct 2009).



*Serve all
with Love*

Mount Alvernia Hospital is a not-for-profit Catholic Hospital founded by the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) Sisters and guided by the Christian values and the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Are you:

- Searching for clarity or advice on an unresolved ethical issue at work?
- Uncertain where to access ethical resources?
- Starting a human research study?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may need to consult the Ethics Committee.

WHAT IS ETHICS ABOUT?

Ethics is about identifying “the right thing to do” and why it is “the right thing to do.”

At Mount Alvernia Hospital, “ethics” is about “who we are”, which is then reflected in “what we do.”

WHAT IS THE ETHICS COMMITTEE?

The Mount Alvernia Hospital Ethics Committee comprises caregivers and voluntary community members from a variety of backgrounds: bioethics, medical, nursing, legal and pastoral care. There are also laypersons representing the broader community.

The Committee aims to lead the organisation in promoting an ethical culture, by:

1. Providing ethical advice on policies/protocols, on clinical and management issues.
2. Promoting education in ethics and ethical issues, and being an educational resource for caregivers.
3. Considering and approving living donor organ transplants.
4. Considering and approving human research studies.
5. Articulating on behalf of the organisation, its stance on issues being debated within the community which pertain to Catholic moral principles and values.

ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN HEALTH CARE



A strong culture of ethics enables us to meet new and increasingly complex ethical challenges with confidence.

At Mount Alvernia Hospital, ethical decision-making is guided by Catholic principles and values. These are reflected in our Mission, Values, Philosophy and Ethical Directives.

At the core of our Mission and Values, is the dignity of all human life.

CLINICAL ETHICS

Any day-to-day ethical issues and dilemmas, either clinical or management, should be discussed amongst caregivers, and their managers within their immediate work environment. This peer discussion promotes active caregiver participation in ethical decision-making. It is also an effective means of educating in ethics, as caregivers are required to examine the context in which they resolve issues, namely the ethical framework and policies/protocols applied. It is on the basis of peer discussion that caregivers are able to grow in their understanding and commitment to ethics.

After peer discussion has occurred and an issue:

1. is not resolved satisfactorily;
2. persists or is ongoing; or when
3. uncertainty remains

a request for the Committee’s opinion and advice can be made. Such requests should be put in writing to:

Chairman
Ethics Committee
Mount Alvernia Hospital
820 Thomson Road
Singapore 574623

However, if the issue or issues are acute and require immediate attention, they should be referred to your Hospital Executive, that is your Director of Nursing, Director of Clinical Services or Chief Executive Officer.

In the past, the Committee has provided ethical advice on issues such as withdrawal of extra-ordinary life support for newborns with severe congenital heart disease and application of research related to human subjects. The Committee has also advised on policies pertaining to implementing Advanced Medical Directives.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

The Ethics Committee is available as a primary resource to assist our hospital staff in their ethics education initiatives. The Committee can be contacted for direction on accessing ethical resources, such as various guidelines, contact details for bio-ethicists and where to search for information on ethical issues.



WHEN DO I NEED TO ACCESS THE ETHICS COMMITTEE?

All living donor organ transplants (involving unrelated donors) conducted at Mount Alvernia Hospital require the approval of the Ethics Committee.

All research involving human subjects conducted at Mount Alvernia Hospital require the approval of the Ethics Committee.

All ethical issues should first be discussed amongst caregivers. When issues are not resolved satisfactorily, persist or are ongoing, or uncertainty remains, then clarification and ethical advice can be sought in writing from the Ethics Committee. However, if an ethical issue is acute and requires immediate attention, it should be referred to Hospital Executive rather than the Ethics Committee.

The Ethics Committee can provide direction on accessing ethical resources.