ETHICAL ISSUES AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

NHPCO Standard(s): EBR 6; EBR 6.1; EBR 6.2

Regulatory Citation(s):

POLICY STATEMENT: Hope Hospice and Palliative Care identifies ethical issues and has a defined process for handling these issues when they arise.

Definition: Ethical issues may be identified when there is a conflict between two or more important values. Examples of potential ethical issues include, but are not limited to:

a. a patient’s welfare vs. a patient’s right to decide for or against treatment;

b. the goal of prolonging life vs. the goal of maximizing the quality of life;

c. a family member’s preference to withhold information from the patient vs. the patient’s right to know; and

d. withdrawal of life sustaining treatment vs. prolongation of life.

PROCEDURES:

1. The hospice designates qualified individuals to serve on the Ethics Committee which serves as a resource and provides an open forum for addressing ethical concerns.

2. The Ethics Committee meets as needed to review issues of ethical concern, review policies and procedures related to the hospice’s ethical practices, and to consider the educational needs of hospice employees and volunteers and the community related to ethical issues.

3. Any employee, volunteer, patient, family member or member of the community may identify concerns of an ethical nature and request consultation from the Ethics Committee.

4. The Ethics Committee may convene special meetings to address ethical issues that warrant immediate attention.

5. Minutes are kept for each meeting of the Ethics Committee.
6. Hospice employees and volunteers should contact the Executive Director or designee for information regarding the identification of ethical issues and procedures.

7. Patients and family members are provided with information regarding the existence of the Ethics Committee as a resource for discussing and, when possible, resolving ethical concerns.