

The background features a vertical dotted line on the left with three olive green circles. The lower half is dominated by flowing, overlapping waves in shades of blue, teal, and olive green. A grid of light blue dots is visible in the bottom left corner, and a pattern of small circles is in the top right.

CODE OF ETHICS



CODE OF ETHICS

VITALITÉ HEALTH NETWORK

Preamble

This Code of Ethics defines the rights and responsibilities of patients as well as the responsibilities of caregivers. We undertake to adhere to the values, principles and rules set out in this code.

Vitalité Health Network endorses the following ethical values:

- Human dignity
- Autonomy
- Beneficence
- Équity

The patients are our raison d'être and we undertake to:

- treat them with respect and dignity, taking into account their autonomy, needs and values
- provide them with care and services with kindness, courtesy and compassion
- recognize their participation in their treatments and keep them informed
- consider them to be full citizens; that is, as having rights, and the means to ensure those rights are respected, as well as responsibilities

We want to meet their needs, and we undertake to:

- keep our expertise up to date
- offer quality care and services
- adhere to this Code of Ethics and our professional codes of conduct



SECTION 1

Rights of patients

1.1 Right to care and services

You have the right to quality health care and services in a safe environment and in the official language of your choice.

You have the right to be informed of the care and services that exist, where they can be obtained, how to access them, and how long the expected waiting period is.

1.2 Right to dignity and beneficence

You have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and understanding. We want to respect your dignity, autonomy and needs.

When you are vulnerable, we undertake to be even more attentive to your needs.

You have the right to discretion and respect for your privacy.

1.3 Right to autonomy

You have the right to respect for your autonomy. From this stems, your right to accept or refuse care or services. If you are not in a state to make decisions, a designated person, decision-maker or next of kin may do so on your behalf.

You also have the right to make decisions that involve you and are of a personal nature.

You have the right to refuse a suggested treatment.

1.4 Right to equity

You have the right to receive the same care and the same services as any other person, regardless of your individual differences.

1.5 Right to information to consent to your care and services

You have the right to be informed of your state of health, diagnosis, treatment, alternatives and prognosis in terms you can understand. This will allow you to give your free and informed consent.

We want you to participate in decisions regarding your care, services and treatments.

You may be accompanied and assisted by a person of your choice when you wish to obtain information or begin a process involving care or services offered.

1.6 Right to confidentiality and respect for your privacy

You have the right to the confidentiality of all information about you, and to respect for your privacy (for example, your chart, personal information, presence and the reason for your presence in the health care network, etc.).



SECTION 2

Responsibilities of patients

2.1 Cooperation

We would like you to cooperate with staff in assessing and improving your state of health. You should provide us with relevant information about your needs.

2.2 Interpersonal relations

We expect you to be polite and understanding with other patients, staff members, students and volunteers, and not to behave in a threatening manner toward them. We will not accept any form of violence or harassment.

2.3 Respect for property

We remind you that you should show respect for the property of the institution and of other people.

2.4 Consent

We encourage you to provide all information about your health (illnesses, hospitalizations, medication that has been prescribed for you, etc.) that may influence the care, services and treatments you receive.

Before consenting to care, services or treatments, you should request explanations or ask questions about anything you do not understand. We therefore encourage you to ask questions about examinations and treatments that are suggested to you and to become informed about the risks and treatment options available.

2.5 Refusal of treatment

You may refuse any care or services. If you do, you must understand the likely consequences of your refusal.

2.6 Participation in care and services

We encourage you to participate in the care and services offered to you, making sure that you understand the information you are given and your role in the continuity of your care and services. We encourage you to talk openly about your care with your care team and to adopt healthy lifestyle habits to stay in good health and prevent illness.

2.7 Living will

It is important to inform your physician of your wishes regarding the care and services you wish to receive when you are no longer capable of making decisions yourself. You should also provide him or her with the name and telephone number of the person who will be making decisions on your behalf.



SECTION 3

Responsibilities of caregivers

3.1 Common goal: your health

It is our goal to offer you health care and services that are high-quality on the physical, emotional and spiritual levels, in the official language of your choice and in a safe environment.

We undertake to keep our training up to date.

We work as a team to ensure that care and services are coordinated.

We maintain connections with partners in order to promote continuity of care and services.

3.2 Respect for dignity

We will treat you with kindness and we will refrain from any abuse or degrading attitudes. No form of violence or harassment toward you will be permitted.

We will identify ourselves and explain the reason for our intervention when we approach you.

We will address you politely and call you by your last name unless you instruct us otherwise.

We will be polite and understanding by, among other things, including you in conversations and listening to you. We encourage you to express your needs and expectations.

In so doing, we hope to build a relationship of trust with you.

Toward the end of your life, we will be sure to respect your dignity and we will offer you support services.

3.3 Respect for equity

We undertake to treat you equitably, regardless of your individual differences.

We will refrain from any form of discrimination toward you, including with respect to your ethnic or national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or physical or mental disabilities.



3.4 Respect for confidentiality and protection of personal information

All information about you is confidential.

Relevant information about you is accessible only to professionals providing you with care and services. We are not authorized to disclose it or communicate its contents to others without your implied or written authorization, unless we are faced with one of the specific situations provided for under legislation.

We will keep secret anything you tell us in confidence, unless it can help your attending physician or a caregiver in the care and services you require. In that case, it will be shared in a context that respects the protection of your personal information.

We will be discreet by refraining from commenting in public places on your state of health, social status, reactions and treatment, service or care plan.

3.5 Respect for your right to information

We recognize your right to participate in any decision affecting your state of health, as well as the planning of your care and services. To that end, we will inform you about your condition, the care and services you will receive changes in your health and steps to be taken to improve your well-being.

We will make sure you understand the information we give you. We will be open to any request for information you express.

If you wish, your loved ones will be encouraged to participate in this process.

Upon request, we will inform you of the steps to take to access your chart.

3.6 Respect for privacy

We will respect your privacy under all circumstances. When the door to your room or an examination or treatment room is closed or the curtain around your bed is drawn, we will knock or make our presence known, then pause before entering.

We will also be discreet and sensitive when providing you with care and services.

We will stay out of private conversations you may have with your loved ones.

3.7 Consent and refusal of health care and services

We undertake to provide you with information on your state of health and the care and services we suggest. As a result, you will be able to consent to the care and services, or to refuse them. However, you have the right to a period of time to reflect on them, if you so need.

We will inform you of the availability of resources and options to help you make an informed decision.

If you are unable to consent to care or services, we will provide your decision-maker or next of kin with the information they need to be able to consent or refuse on your behalf, with your best interests in mind.



SECTION 4

Other information

4.1 Teaching mission

As part of our teaching mission, we offer student training programs. Students participating in our programs provide care and services appropriate to their level of training, under the supervision and authority of professionals. They contribute to the quality of care and services, while training to become the next generation of health-care providers.

4.2 Research mission

Our Network has a research mission, helping to advance science and the quality of care and services.

Researchers' projects are studied by the Ethics Committee before being approved. Your attending physician, in cooperation with the researchers, may ask you to participate in a project. He or she will give you the information you need in order to give your informed, written consent, or to refuse. We assure you that a refusal on your part will not affect the quality of care and services you will continue to receive.

4.3 Request for Clinical Ethics Consultation

An Ethics Committee has been established in each zone of the Network to offer consultation services in order to resolve ethical conflicts or to enlighten you when you have a difficult decision to make. You may request a consultation simply by using the form available in the care units.



4.4 Questions or Concerns

The Network undertakes to offer you quality care and services in order to meet your needs and the needs of your family. Your satisfaction with the care and services received is important to us.

If you have any questions or concerns about the care or services you have received, or about your rights and responsibilities, we would like to know about it. We suggest that you first bring it up with a member of your care team (physician, nurse, physiotherapist, unit manager, etc.). In many cases, this simple step will resolve the situation.

If you have not received a satisfactory response to your questions or concerns, or you wish to file a complaint, you may contact the local Quality and Patient Safety department:

- **Beauséjour Zone** (Moncton and area): 506-862-3767
- **Northwest Zone** (Edmundston and area): 506-739-2221
- **Restigouche Zone** (Campbellton and area): 506-789-5023
- **Acadie-Bathurst Zone** (Bathurst and Acadian Peninsula): 506-544-2057

Finally, you may also direct comments to us by completing the satisfaction surveys available in the health care sectors, or in one of the following ways:

- In writing: Regional Quality and Patient Safety Department
Vitalité Health Network
275 Main St., Suite 600
Bathurst, NB
E2A 1A9
- By e-mail: Qualite.Quality@vitalitenb.ca
- Toll-free: 1-877-286-1311

Conclusion

Everyone involved at Vitalité Health Network undertakes to work not only to improve your health, but also to support you in improving your well-being.

We hope that the values espoused in this document serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for both you and us as we strive to offer health care and services that meet your needs.

2014-09