

Building Ethics Capacity at Humber River Hospital (HRH)



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Lessons Learned

Improved ethics capacity is achievable in a large Canadian community hospital, by virtue consistent communications, regular education sessions and face-to-face experiential learning.

Description

Exemplary medical care requires both medical expertise and ethical know-how, which is why the HRH Clinical and Organizational ethicist launched several initiatives to build ethics capacity at Humber. Ethics capacity is achieved when everyone working or volunteering at HRH recognises ethical issues, can access tools to resolve day-to-day ethical dilemmas and knows where to get help when they encounter difficult cases.

Actions Taken

The following initiatives aim to build ethics capacity at HRH:

- Ethics Forum: Open monthly meeting to discuss difficult cases and apply IDEA², HRH's ethical decision-making framework
- Ethics Bulletin: Monthly ethics newsletter
- Education: regular presentations for clinical practice leaders, grand rounds presentations, in-services, huddle presentations and orientations.
- Consult tracking system: Database designed to track types of consults to target educational opportunities.

Summary of Results

Eighteen monthly bulletins and 10 ethics forums have been completed. An increasing number of Ethics Forum participants participate in experiential learning sessions during which they apply HRH's ethical frameworks to difficult cases. Ethics service has also seen a growing number of consult requests (essentially doubling) over time as well as increased requests for in-services, rounds and other types of presentations. Ethics bulletins posted hospital-wide and distributed via email have also caused HRH community members to contact ethicist for more information.

Types of Ethical Issues

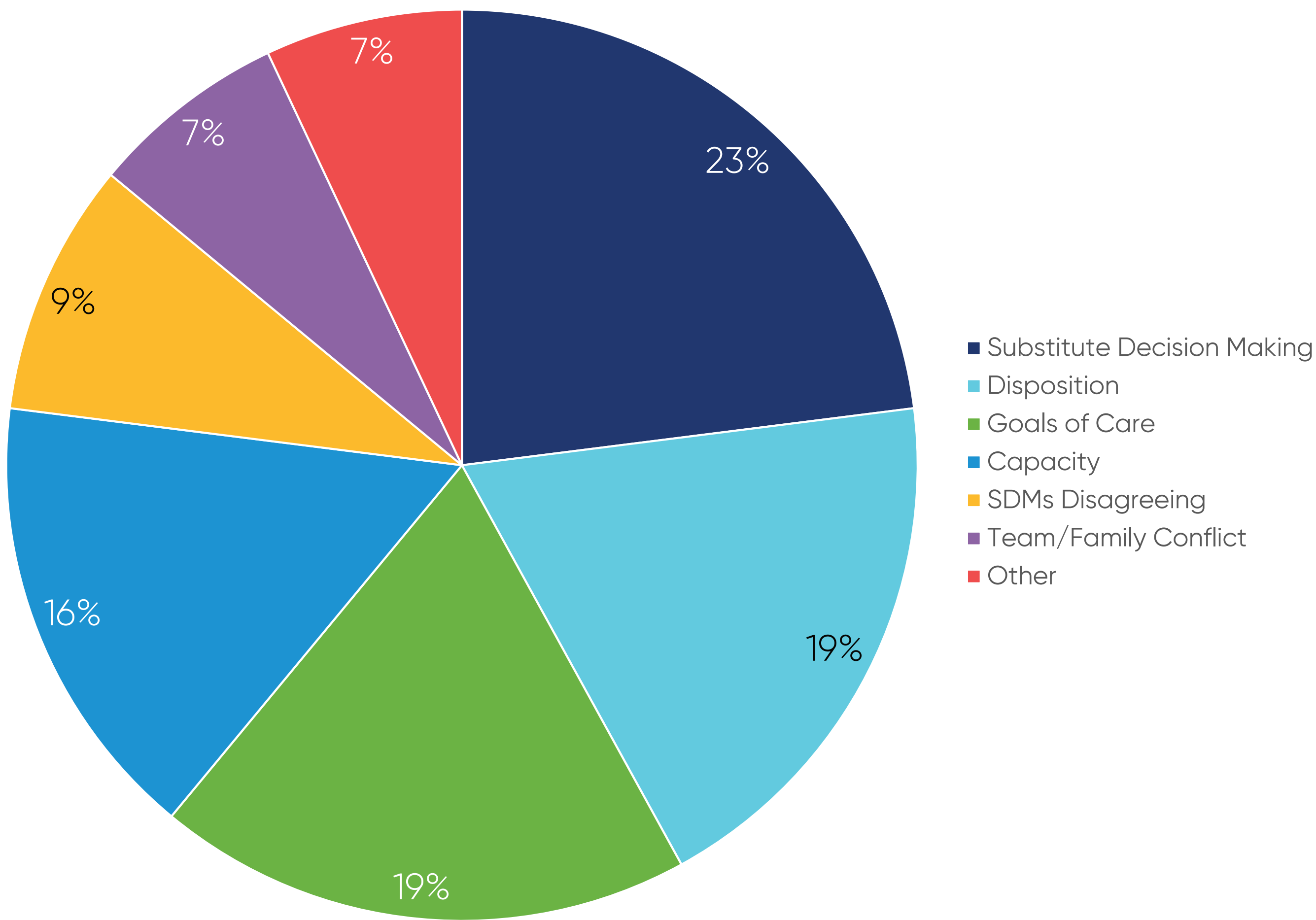


Figure 1. Most common issues giving rise to ethics consults.



Figure 2. Monthly Ethic Bulletin posted hospital-wide



Figure 3. Ethics Forum participants applying the IDEA² ethical framework.