This tool is designed to guide individuals and teams to engage in rigorous and reflective decision-making when facing ethical issues. Ethical decision-making is not linear; you may revisit earlier steps as the process unfolds.

ISSUES: Identify, Study, Select, Understand, Evaluate, Sustain

1. Identify issue and decision-making process:
   - What is the ethical issue/dilemma/conflict as you see it?
   - Reflect on: What is your gut reaction to the situation? What are your feelings? Where do these responses come from?
   - Who is impacted by the situation? How can all stakeholders be engaged?

2. Study the Facts:
   - Gather information about the situation from a variety of stakeholders.
   - Be inclusive of multiple perspectives, including patients and families, if possible
   - Ensure everyone has a voice. Be aware of differences in power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence-Informed Practice: (Consider: history of the issue; risks, benefits; best practices; past cases; literature)</th>
<th>Stakeholder Perspectives: (Consider the interests/concerns of: patient/family; staff/physicians; community/partners; etc.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource Implications: (Consider: Impact on human/financial resources, quality or access to care/services.)</td>
<td>Contextual Factors: (Consider: legal requirements; hospital policy; cultural issues; external directives; systems issues)</td>
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3. **Select Reasonable Options:**
   - Based on the facts gathered, what are the realistic options? (look for more than two)

   Option 1: 
   Option 2: 
   Option 3: 

4. **Understand Values and Duties:**
   - What principles, duties and values are relevant to the situation (see list below)?
   - What are the legal requirements, professional standards and policies?
   - Are key values, duties, principles or standards in conflict?

   **Relevant Values and Duties:**
   HHS Mission, Vision & Values; Legislation; Policies; Utility & Justice; Veracity & Transparency; Physical & Psychological Safety; Confidentiality & Privacy; Relationships & Teamwork; Respect for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Capacity; Autonomy; Best Interests; Do Good and Reduce Harm; Promote Individual and Population Health; Evidence Base Practice; Professional Ethics.

5. **Evaluate & Justify Options:**
   - What are the possible harms/benefits of various options to different stakeholders?
   - Choose the option with best alignment with duties, principles and values.
   - State clear reasons for your choice; anticipate questions and criticisms.

   **Pros/Cons of Option 1:** 

   **Pros/Cons of Option 2:** 

   **Pros/Cons of Option 3:** 

6. **Sustain & Review the Plan:**
   - Identify how best to implement, communicate and document the decision.
   - Reflect on the decision and the process. What worked well? What lessons can be learned? How can these lessons be shared? Is there a quality improvement opportunity?
   - Does this situation point to a systemic issue, such as a policy gap? How might it be addressed?

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