

Appendix 2. The UHN A4R Ethical Decision Tool

Step 1: List the stakeholders included in the deliberation process.

Step 2: Name the question or COVID-19 related issue you are trying to address.

Step 3: List the solutions / scenarios / questions your team will explore.

Step 4: For each solution/ scenario/ question to the issue identified complete the two tables (principles and criteria) below by placing a checkmark (i.e., assigning one point) in the applicable column.

Principles

Principle	Does the proposed solution...	Yes	No	Only if...	N/A
1 Beneficence / Non-maleficence	Limit harm wherever possible. Activities that have higher implications for morbidity/mortality if delayed too long should be prioritized over those with fewer implications for morbidity/mortality if delayed too long.				
2 Autonomy	Empower patients and their families to make informed decisions about their care.				
3 Equity / Consistency	Promote equity and fairness by treating like cases alike and not disadvantaging already vulnerable groups. Equity requires that all persons in the same categories (e.g., at different levels of urgency) be treated in the same way unless relevant differences exist.				
4 Evidence-informed	Grounded in the best available evidence, data and guidelines/recommendations from government / government-agencies.				
5 Proportionality	Include measures taken to protect the public (or individuals) from harm should be proportionate to the level of risk consistent with current best practice, or best available evidence regarding a particular risk so individuals are made to feel safe.				
6 Reciprocity	Include efforts to mitigate impacts (including consideration of psychological impacts) on our staff, physicians and learners through a fair process of resource allocation.				
7 Stewardship	Decisions will take into account the impact of changes in clinical activity on all of our resources, including consideration of and impact of decisions on relationships between providers and patients, and across the system.				

Criteria

Criterion	Does the proposed solution...	Yes	No	Only if...	N/A
1 Medical Need	Without the service/program being delivered, there is a high implication for morbidity/mortality. There is urgency and severity (seriously debilitating or life-threatening condition) associated with patients waiting for the service/program.				
2 Impact on Life	Benefit is defined as quality of life. There is a high likelihood of benefit for the patient, and the service/program would limit suffering experience as physical or psychological pain.				
3 Specialized Service	The service is part of the core set of specialized service at UHN that patients would not otherwise be able to access. <i>To be considered with Medical Need – if care can be done elsewhere, could be de-prioritized.</i>				
4 Other Treatment Options	Clinical procedures should be offered in the context of a range of treatment and care possibilities. Can the service be offered through other options? (Shared care? Virtual Care? Modified treatment options?) How do the risks/benefits of different options compare?				
5 Length of Wait / Backlog	Where all else is equal (e.g., likelihood of benefit, likelihood of harm), if evaluating multiple programs against a fixed resource, the program with a larger backlog would be prioritized. Where all else is equal, and in consideration of above, a patient waiting longer should receive access before a patient who has waited for a shorter period of time.				
6 Impact on Other Resources	What is the impact on resource utilization (e.g., having to use additional chemotherapy because of delayed procedure)? <i>Some specialized services may require complex interdisciplinary care. Consider the need to preserve resources for the second wave of the pandemic / flu season.</i>				

Step 5: Review which solution/ scenario/ question meets the highest number of principles and criteria (each principle or criterion fulfilled is worth 1 point). Add rows as needed.

Solution	Principles							Criteria						Score (‘yes’ is assigned 1 point)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6		

Step 6: Articulate your final decision and rationale.

Decision/ Recommendation	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommend solution without conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend solution with conditions. Specify conditions _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend solution without conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT recommend solution	

Step 7: Communicate your decision to CART Exec (for documentation purposes, not approval), implement your decision. Determine when the solution will be revisited or at what interval it will be evaluated. Return to Step 1 in the evaluation process as new questions/issues arise.