



Revised September 2016

Message from the Executive Leadership Team, IWK Health Centre

The Executive Leadership Team is pleased to share our Code of Conduct.

As a key component of our Respect at IWK Framework, this Code of Conduct reflects our commitment to the women, children, youth and families we serve by describing how we conduct ourselves in our daily work. It sets a standard for affirmative relationships and provides direction on relevant professional and personal standards to ensure we uphold the mission and values that have made the IWK a respected and trusted organization.

We are all responsible for creating and maintaining a physically safe, psychologically healthy and supportive work environment. As you review this document I ask that you give consideration to how the Code supports healthy workplace behaviour and how you may use it to help build a respectful workplace.

Introduction

As IWK Team members, we are committed to the mission, aspirations and values of the organization. This includes being accountable for our relationships, decisions and actions. Our goal is to create a work environment that values diversity, where all people are treated with respect, consideration, acceptance and dignity, people learn from mistakes, and systems are in place to help make change. In doing so, all employees, staff, volunteers and students are expected to demonstrate behaviours that are consistent with these values. Throughout this document, the individuals listed above will be referred to as the “IWK team” or “IWK team members.”

Our Code of Conduct (“Our Code”) is like a compass – it provides guidance by defining and providing direction on expected standards of behaviour that are characterized by the highest sense of ethical integrity and humanistic values.

Our Code is principles-based. It anchors specific IWK bylaws, policies, procedures, standards, guidelines, regulations and directives that set out the rules by which we govern ourselves (see Appendix A) and the steps we will take should we fall short.

Regardless of where we are working within the IWK – at the University Avenue facility, in the community, on the road, or from home – our actions should always be guided by Our Code. Each of us must ensure that we understand Our Code and know who to talk to when we find ourselves in a situation where the behaviours made explicit in Our Code are being tested. Formal leaders have the additional responsibility of ensuring that all individuals within their supervision understand these requirements.

Further support in understanding and applying Our Code is available from leaders and from the resources and contacts (Appendix B) listed at the end of this document.

Who is a Leader?

As members of a team, licensed profession, or committee and as stewards of the organization we are all leaders, regardless of our role or position, and must exercise leadership in co-creating a respectful environment.

Formal leaders are members of the IWK who are accountable and responsible for the day-to-day management of a unit or work area. Among other things, their accountabilities include hiring, supervising, coaching and guiding the performance of the people who report to them. They may have a title like Supervisor, Manager, Director, Vice President, CEO, Physician Leader, Department Head, or Division Head. There are additional leaders in the Health Centre who share accountability for some or all of these duties. They include Professional Practice Leaders, Physicians and Team Leads.

Formal leaders play an important role in helping to ensure the principles of Our Code are supported.

- They treat all persons with respect and dignity as per Our Code and set a positive example;
- They provide team members with opportunities to learn and understand Our Code;
- They support and protect any IWK Team member who, in good faith, reports a potential violation of Our Code; and
- They ensure allegations of Code violations are referred for investigation as appropriate.

Who does the code apply to?

Our Code applies to all IWK Health Centre Team members. This includes all employees of the IWK Health Centre, all levels of IWK administration and management and all individuals who provide care or services or who act on behalf of the IWK Health Centre, including but not limited to:

- Regular full-time and part-time employees
- Temporary full-time and part-time employees
- Casual employees
- Individuals employed under an individual consulting, service contract or franchise employees
- Medical, dental, and scientific staff
- Researchers
- Physicians
- Volunteers
- Learners/students
- Educators
- Board of Directors

IWK team members who are licensed by a regulatory or professional body are also expected to adhere to any requirements imposed by those entities.

Our Mission, Values and Aspirations

The IWK Health Centre's Mission and Aspirations (Appendix C) are at the centre of all that we do. They create a shared understanding about how we relate to our patients, families, each other and the community, and are essential to maintaining the trust, confidence and respect we have earned over the past 100 years.

Our values are safe, compassionate care through leadership, innovation, integrity, and partnerships. Together, these form the basis of our strategic foundation and guide our actions under Our Code.

Key Principles

Our Code aims to build a foundation based on trust and respect where our principles guide us and help us do the right thing. By being clear about the expectations we have for one another and ensuring there is a process in place to address any issues that may arise, we create a better place to work and a better place for patients and families to receive services. A poster of Our Code can be found in Appendix E. More detailed information is provided below.

Our Code is rooted in five key principles:

1. Treat everyone with respect and dignity
2. Ensure a safe and healthy environment
3. Act with honesty and integrity
4. Promote and represent the mission and values of the IWK
5. Safeguard information and assets that are entrusted to us

These principles are meant to guide actions and are not listed in order of priority. Further, depending on the situation, it should be acknowledged that these principles could potentially come into conflict or support different actions. In these situations, IWK team members should attempt to balance the competing responsibilities or obligations that may arise from these principles.

For example, respecting a patient's cultural beliefs (principle one), such as a smudging ceremony, and ensuring a safe environment (principle two) requires a balancing of these two principles. It should also be acknowledged that, depending on the situation, there may be disagreement about or difference in interpretation and application of these principles. However, the overall expectation is that the spirit of these principles (fairness, respect, etc.) should guide how these situations are addressed and resolved.

1. Treat everyone with respect and dignity

- We are committed to creating an environment within the IWK that is safe, welcoming and inclusive of all persons, treating everyone with respect and dignity.
- We believe that physical and emotional safety is the right and responsibility of every person.
- We are committed to working with our diverse communities and celebrating the richness that these communities contribute to the cultural, social, health and enrichment of Atlantic Canada.
- We are committed to a workplace culture that is collaborative, supportive, encourages open communication and knowledge sharing, and respects the contributions of all IWK team members.
- We are committed to an environment that encourages empathy and understanding and fosters healthy relationships among IWK team members, patients, families and the community.

2. Ensure a safe and healthy environment

- We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment that supports the health, safety, security and wellness of all persons.
- We are committed to identifying, preventing and addressing threats to personal safety and security including violence, bullying, harassment or discrimination of any sort.
- We come forward if we think we have been treated unfairly, and support others in doing the same.
- We come forward if we are aware of any risk to IWK team members, the organization, patients, families, the community and/or other stakeholders (i.e. external health care providers, government agencies, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, etc.), and support the remedy of any such risk in a timely and effective manner.
- We are committed to reducing or eliminating exposure to smoke, scents and other environmental influences for the health and safety of our IWK team members, patients, families and the public.

3. Act with honesty and integrity

- We are committed to maintaining the trust of patients, families, our peer/colleagues and the community by ensuring the acts of all IWK team members are conducted honestly and with integrity.
- We are committed to building trust and being trustworthy.
- We take responsibility for our actions and decisions.
- We take responsibility for, correct and learn from our mistakes.
- We uphold all standards, codes of conduct and codes of ethics that apply to us.
- We uphold applicable laws, regulations, bylaws, principles, policies, procedures, standards and other applicable guidelines and directives.
- We always strive to behave in an ethical manner, and strive to avoid situations that create real or perceived conflict of interest.
- We will disclose any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest situation as soon as possible so that steps can be taken to resolve the situation.
- We will withdraw from decision-making or business processes where real or perceived conflicts of interest exist.

4. Promote and represent the mission, values and aspirations of the IWK

- We ensure that all activities and communications reflect the IWK's mission, values and aspirations.
- We are committed to promoting system leadership, partnership and advocacy; innovation and research; patient and family experience; quality and safety; our people and responsible stewardship.

5. Safeguarding Information and Assets

- We protect the information and assets entrusted to us, including:
 - All personal health information of our patients and their families; personal information of IWK team members and IWK business information;
 - Financial assets of the IWK (budgets, funds, grants, etc.);
 - Property, physical equipment and assets of the IWK;
 - Copyright, intellectual property, research, academic materials; and
 - Maintaining and protecting appropriate records, reports and files consistent with policies and legislation.

What is my role?

Each one of us is responsible for:

- Treating all persons with respect and dignity in ways that are in keeping with Our Code;
- Reading and understanding Our Code and staying current with and complying with applicable IWK bylaws, principles, policies, procedures, standards and any other applicable guidelines, directives or regulations;
- Learning how to constructively and respectfully address behaviours that are in violation of Our Code;
- Acting in a supportive capacity where appropriate;
- Holding each other accountable for our behaviour; and
- Bringing questions, concerns, and code violations to the attention of our formal leader.

Code Violations

We start with the fundamental belief that everyone who works at, and represents, the IWK is professional, responsible and well intentioned. But sometimes we slip. These are often opportunities for learning and development – as individuals, teams and as an organization. At the same time, we need to know that repeated or serious violations of Our Code will be addressed by the organization in order to maintain our credibility and the trust of those who depend on us.

Where a violation is reported, we will follow the appropriate investigation process, which in some cases may require the involvement of external bodies (e.g. professional college, regulatory body, legal system). Where the violation is founded, it is important that we all understand that corrective action will be followed and may include termination of employment or other relationships with the IWK without notice.

Our hope is that we work together to identify, report and address issues early to avoid such drastic measures as termination. In fact, this should be our last resort. Other processes available to us in addressing violations to Our Code include:

- Direct Communication (refer to Procedures/Guidelines in Policy #822)
- Coaching/feedback discussion
- Conflict mediation
- Counseling/education/training
- Team building/education sessions
- Issuance of a warning

- Performance development plan
- Barring from the premises
- Removal/suspension of privileges
- Complaint to a regulatory body

Obligation to Report Code Violations

The IWK Team member faced with behaviour violating Our Code is encouraged, if reasonable, comfortable, and safe, to make a direct request of the individual(s) concerned that the behaviour stop immediately.

If unable to address violations of Our Code with direct communication to “the offender (s),” or if direct communication is not successful, each of us have an obligation to report Code violations by speaking to your formal leader or to the appropriate contact listed in Appendix B, or as otherwise provided in an applicable bylaw, policy, procedure, standard, guideline, regulation and directive, etc.

Any reported violations of Our Code will be treated confidentially to the extent possible and in a manner consistent with the IWK’s responsibility to address the issue raised.

Protection from Retaliation

Retaliation is considered a serious disciplinary breach. Any acts of retaliation need to be reported to the person’s immediate formal leader or Human Resources. Anyone who retaliates in any way against a person who has complained of violation of Our Code will themselves be disciplined accordingly up to an including termination of employment.

Conclusion

As one of Canada’s leading health centres, we are focus on delivering the best care to the patients and families we serve. However, we can’t continue to deliver that level of care if we don’t pay attention to each other and our work environment. By committing to our Code of Conduct, we are committing to create a work environment that allows all of us to perform at our best.

We encourage you to review this document and the five principles to help guide you in your work. We also ask you to help us in maintaining the kind of work environment that enables you and your colleagues to perform at your best. It starts with the simple conversations you have on your unit or office, in conversations with your manager or professional practice leaders. And, if you have any questions or concerns, we want to ensure you know where you can turn for support and resources.

As one of our more than 3,000 ambassadors within the IWK Health Centre family, we want to thank you for your continued commitment and service to creating an even better workplace and trusted organization in our community.

Appendix A – Related Policies, Procedures & Bylaws

All members of the IWK Health Centre should be familiar with and adhere to existing policies, procedures and bylaws relating to professional, personal and academic behaviour.

Please note, many units/departments have additional policies, procedures, practices and standards that are applicable to their areas. IWK team members must follow those requirements as well.

The following list is provided for information only. It is not a complete list of IWK policies, procedures and bylaws. IWK team members may access most of the documents below on PULSE, the IWK Health Centre's intranet (for policies go to All Policies section on Pulse, which also links to One Province, One Process, One policy [OP3]).

- [Accreditation Standards](#)
- Board Governance Policies – Office of the General Counsel
- Corporate Bylaws – Office of the General Counsel
- Delegation of Authority and Establishment of Controls for Commitments
- IWK Administrative Investigation Process
- [IWK Position Statement on Diversity, Inclusion and Culturally Competent Care](#)
- [IWK Strategic Plan and Our Aspirations](#)
- Medical, Dental, and Affiliated Staff Bylaws – Office of Medical Credentialing
- [Organizational Charts for IWK Leadership](#)
- [Respect at IWK Framework](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Brochure](#)
- Respectful Workplace line (902-470-7340)
- [Respectful Workplace - Harassment and Bullying Policy](#) (Policy 822.0)
- [Respectful Workplace - Violence Policy](#) (Policy 1071.1)
- [IWK Health Centre Ethical Strategy and Framework](#)
- Professional Standards and Codes of Ethics
- Partners in Care Document

Other Relevant Policies

General

- 103.0 [Scent Reduction Policy](#)
- 104.2 [Smoke-Free Policy](#)
- 106.0 [Photo Identification Badges](#)
- 109.0 [Chart Control](#)
- 113.0 [Dress Code/Appearance Protocol](#)
- 116.0 [Discipline](#)
- 117.0 [Signage Policy](#)
- 119.1 [Common Area Usage](#)
- 129.0 [Intellectual Property](#)
- 130.0 [Nursing Uniforms Policy](#)

- 132.0 Signing Authority
- 133.0 Temporary Signage Policy
- 134.0 Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities
- 135.0 Conflicts of Interest Policy

Communications

- 200.1 Overhead Announcements
- 208.1 Media Relations
- 210.0 Employee Use of 'All Staff' Email Distribution List

Quality & Risk Management

- 301.2 Adverse Event and Good Catch (Near Miss) Reporting
- 303.1 Security of Electronic Information
- 304.0 Interacting With Law Enforcement
- 315.1 Internet Access
- 319.1 Security of Secondary/Linked Databases Containing Health Centre Data
- 320.1 Confidentiality
- 322.0 Use of Health Centre Patient Records for Research Purposes
- 328.1 Disclosure of (Harm Related) Patient Safety Incidents
- 331.0 Patient and Family Feedback Follow-up Process Policy
- 333.0 Privacy of Personal Health Information

Facilities, Equipment, Properties & Supplies

- 400.0 Capital Equipment Request and Acquisition
- 402.1 Purchasing of Goods, Services and Construction
- 403.1 Request for Quotation
- 404.1 Return of Supplies for Credit/Exchange
- 405.1 Protocol for Sales Representatives
- 406.1 Production of Printed Matters
- 407.1 Vendor Relations
- 408.0 Identification & Receipt of Goods by Shipping & Receiving
- 410.0 Information Services Software Support
- 412.1 Parking Policy
- 415.0 Use of Cell Phones and Other Wireless Devices in Care Areas

Employment

- 802.1 Recruitment & Employee Selection Policy
- 810.0 Letters of Reference
- 812.0 Releasing References and/or Information on IWK Grace Health Centre Employees
- 819.0 Performance Review Objective
- 822.0 Respectful Workplace - Harassment and Bullying
- 833.0 Grievance/Dispute Resolution Non-Union/ Management Staff
- 861.0 Employee Files - Access and Information Retention

Occupational Health & Safety

- 1001.3 The IWK Health Centre Occupational Health & Safety Statement and Accountabilities
- 1003.1 Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

1004.0 Attendance Support Policy
1006.0 Attending Physician's Report & Sick Leave Benefit
1007.0 Modified Work and Accommodation for Employees
1010.2 Workplace Hazard Identification and Workplace Safety Inspections Policy
1015.3 Reporting and Investigating Workplace Injuries/ Incidents and Safety Concerns Policy
1021.0 Contractor Safety Policy
1030.2 WHMIS and Hazardous Chemicals/Substances
1050.1 Pre-Placement Health Assessment
1053.1 Blood and/or Body Fluids Exposure Policy
1054.2 Confidentiality Policy (Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness Department)
1058.2 Employee Usage of Diagnostic Services
1059.0 Employee Addiction to Medication/Drug/Alcohol Policy
1071.1 Respectful Workplace - Violence Policy

Appendix B – Resources and Contacts

The following list is meant to support you if you have specific questions related to an area or issue. These contacts will have the subject matter expertise to guide you to the appropriate policy, procedure, training program, or other resources. However, if you have a general question or are seeking guidance on who to contact, please call Human Resources at 470-8012.

Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator	902-470-7362
Emergency Response (IWK Health Centre)	3333
Emergency Response (Offsites)	911
Ethics Committee	Chair at 902-470-7836, or Requests for Clinical or Organizational Ethics Consultations should be directed to the dedicated Ethics line: 470-8053. This is a confidential call.
Patient & Family Feedback Coordinator	1-855-IWK-CARE (1-855-495-2273)
Finance	902-470-3722
Human Resources	902-470-8012
Information Technology	902-470-6700
Learning/Student Placement	Manager, Learning Team at 902-470-6734
Medical Staff Office	902-470-8202
Occupational Health Safety and Wellness	902-470-7949
Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee	Chair at 902-470-8961
Privacy Coordinator	902-470-8155
Professional Practice Leaders	Manager, Interprofessional Practice at 902-470-6827
Protection Services	902-470-7000
Communications & Public Affair	902-470-6740
Research Office	902-470-6511
Respectful Workplace Line	902-470-7340
Risk Management & General Counsel	902-470-7536
Volunteer Resources	902-470-6692

Unless specific titles are provided, contact numbers are for reception/main desk of each department.

Appendix C – IWK Mission and Our Aspirations

IWK Strategic Plan

MISSION:

To passionately pursue a healthy future for women, children, youth and families

Our Aspirations



In carrying out our Mission, we aspire to:

- Lead the population health agenda for women, children, youth and families in Atlantic Canada with our partners and our communities
- Sustain and grow our position of excellence as an Academic Health Sciences Centre in clinical care, teaching and research
- Drive a culture of creativity, discovery and innovation
- Transform care through fully integrated, internationally recognized research, teaching and care
- Deliver an exceptional experience by engaging patients and families as partners in co-creating care delivery and future models of care
- Commit to the highest standard of quality of care for women, children and youth
- Deliver safe care and create safe environments for our patients, families and staff
- Create an inspiring work environment that supports high performing teams and invigorates the passion and compassion of our people
- Create a system of accountability and achieve operational excellence by using our resources wisely and demonstrating value to our stakeholders

Appendix D – Code of Conduct poster



Code of Conduct

As IWK staff, physicians and volunteers, we will:

Treat Everyone with Respect and Dignity

Welcoming, inclusive, respectful, dignified, collaborative, supportive, open, sharing, empathetic

Ensure a Safe and Healthy Environment

Healthful, secure, responsive, accountable

Act with Honesty and Integrity

Trustworthy, honest, upright, open to learning

Promote and represent the mission, vision and values of the IWK

Committed, innovative, collaborative, focused on continuous improvement

Safeguard Information and Assets

Responsible, protective, trustworthy

Each of the more than 3000 ambassadors within the IWK Health Centre team are committed to creating an excellent workplace and being a trusted provider of service in our community.