

Ethical Assurance Group

Terms of Reference

Version:	1
Approved by:	Medical Director
Ratified by:	Board of Directors
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Frequency of review:	Annual
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1 Name of group / committee

Ethical Assurance Group.

2 Composition of the Group

Members:

Title	Role in the group / committee
Medical Director	Executive lead for ethical issues across the Trust and Chair of this Group.
Chief Operating Officer	Executive lead with day-to-day responsibility for operational delivery of services.
Director of Nursing, Professions & Compliance	Executive lead for nursing and professional standards.
Non-Executive Director	Chair of Quality and Safety Committee.
Non-Executive Director	Chair of Mental Health Legislation Committee.
Non-Executive Director	Chair of Workforce and Equality Committee.

Attendees:

Title	Role in the group / committee
Head of Psychological Therapies	Co-Chair of Ethical Advisory Group.
Consultant Psychiatrist, AMD & Lead CTW Coach	Co-Chair of Ethical Advisory Group.

3 Quoracy

Number: The minimum number of members for a meeting to be quorate is three, two of whom must be Non-Executive Directors. Attendees do not count towards quoracy.

If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, and if otherwise quorate, the meeting will be chaired by one of the other Executive Directors.

Deputies: Where appropriate members may nominate deputies to represent them at a meeting. Deputies do not count towards the calculation of whether the meeting is quorate unless the deputy is representing the member under formal “acting up” arrangements.

Non-quorate meeting: Non-quorate meetings may go ahead unless the Chair decides not to proceed. Any decisions made by a non-quorate meeting must be reviewed at the next quorate meeting.

4 Meetings of the Group

Frequency: Meetings will take place as and when required, on advice from the Medical Director and informed by the Ethical Advisory Group.

Urgent meeting: Any member of the Group may request an urgent meeting.

Minutes: Minutes will be taken by the Trust’s Corporate Governance Secretariat, supported by the Director of Corporate Affairs and Deputy Trust Board Secretary.

Assurance and Escalation Reporting: The Chair of the Group will provide an update of key issues and assurances arising from the meeting to the next Quality and Safety Committee meeting. Appendix A provides the reporting structure into the Quality and Safety Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the respective Chairs of the meetings outlined within the structure to ensure that an effective flow of information and decisions made are reported in a timely way.

Voting: It is at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting to call a vote during a meeting. When voting, decisions at meetings shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Executive and Non-Executive Directors present and voting. In the case of any equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

5 Authority

Establishment: The Ethical Assurance Group has been formally established by the Board. It has a strictly advisory role, is time-bound to operate during COVID-19.

Cessation: The Group may be stood down following a formal review by members of the Quality and Safety Committee (to be undertaken no later than February 2022).

6 Role of the Ethical Assurance Group

6.1 Purpose of the Group

The Group's purpose is to critically and collectively appraise the ethical implications of relevant strategic and operational decisions, and their inherent risks or issues. These decisions, risks or issues may include those related to clinical care and treatment; policy changes; resource management; governance (e.g. quality and safety); significant and unexpected events and their consequences, especially in emergency planning situations.

The Group will appraise assurances from the above ethical implications with reference to:

- the four ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, justice and (patient) autonomy where applicable and/or practicable;
- the core values of the Trust;
- patient-centered care;
- compliance with professional, regulatory, legal and other applicable standards; and
- using an ethical reasoning process¹.

6.2 Guiding principles for members (and attendees) when carrying out the duties of the Committee

In carrying out their duties, members of the Group and any attendees must take all reasonable steps to ensure they act in accordance with the values of the Trust, which are:

- we care;
- we listen; and
- we deliver.

¹employing logic and rational thinking rather than intuition and emotion

7 Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the Group shall be responsible for:

- agreeing the agenda in partnership with the Co-Chairs of the Ethical Advisory Group;
- directing the meeting, ensuring as far as possible that it operates in accordance with the Trust's values and that all attendees have a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the discussion;
- giving appropriate direction to the secretariat and checking the draft minutes;
- ensuring that the agenda is appropriately balanced and relevant, and that discussion is productive; and
- ensuring that sufficient information is presented to the Quality and Safety Committee in respect of the work of the Group.

Appendix A: Reporting structure for the Ethical Assurance Group

