



Catholic Health Association of Ontario

Association Catholique de la Santé de l'Ontario

MISSION DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONS:

A Board and Senior Leadership Guide To Mission, Values, Evaluation and Selection

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CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO
ASSOCIATION CATHOLIQUE CANADIENNE DE LA SANTÉ

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PREFACE

Throughout history, the face of faith-based health care in the Catholic tradition has continually changed in response to the needs of local communities and the pressures of government and other cultural forces. Today is no different. For Catholic health care to be a dynamic force in the years ahead, careful attention needs to be given to the transmission of the mission and values as they have matured over the years.

Leadership continues to be challenged to articulate in word and deed the integrity of Catholic health care. In order to do so, protocols regarding the recruitment and evaluation of trustees, CEOs and senior executive have been developed in order to assist Catholic sponsors and the Church as a whole to evaluate how the mission and values reveal themselves in concrete circumstances and attitudes.

The Ontario experience of searching for a way to fulfill this mandate occurs at a time in which most Catholic health providers and sponsors are seeking for methods and procedures to assist them in their responsibility to the Church to continue the healing mission of Jesus in the midst of a pluralistic and culturally diverse society.

We hope that the following materials garnered from a variety of sources, resources and experiences in North America will provide sponsors, trustees and senior leaders with the framework necessary to ensure the growth and development of Catholic health care into the future.

THE CATHOLIC EXPERIENCE OF HEALTH DELIVERY

The Christian Scriptures continually reveal the experience of the healing power of Jesus to change the lives of people. In response to the Gospel's invitation to model Jesus' own behaviour of healing and reaching out to those in need, throughout history, the words and actions of Jesus have been taken seriously.

From its beginnings, the Catholic Church has continually sought ways to make the healing mission of Jesus tangible wherever it has taken root. Whether it be visiting the sick and abandoned, providing hospices for pilgrims or people left to die on the streets, the Church has responded through various people and organizations.

THE CHURCH'S MISSION

One of the most concrete manifestations of the Church's organizational response within Ontario and Canada has been the establishment of hospitals, health centres, homes and agencies which seek to attend to the needs of the body, mind and soul of those who seek their services. As institutions committed to the healing mission of Jesus, Catholic organizations take their place in society with other providers and persons of diverse faith traditions in a spirit of cooperation, partnership and commitment to the common good of all people.

DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF CATHOLIC HEALTH CARE

Nurtured in a tradition of service of almost 2,000 years, the distinctive nature of Catholic health care reveals itself in its intimate relationship with the Church's mission of healing and service as well as a series of defining principles that has guided its development over the years. The dignity of all people as bearers of the image of God provide the framework for decision-making and standards of care that promotes and protects life at all stages from conception until natural death. Building upon the inherent dignity of all people, spirituality nurtures the belief that God lives and moves among and through us. Spirituality also provides the hidden energy grounding Catholic health care providers as individuals and as organizations as a source of on-going call, purpose and meaning.

From the foundational principles of the dignity of the person and spirituality, springs an ethical perspective that focuses upon the common good of all through its clinical and organizational decision-making. As informed decision-makers, responsible stewardship urges us to honour the resources of people, goods, natural environment and the healing mission of Jesus. As the continuation of the healing ministry of Jesus, Catholic health providers reach out to all people in a manner marked by excellence, inclusiveness, and compassionate caring especially towards the voiceless and powerless people in our midst.

PARTNERSHIPS

In partnership with government, other health care providers, and other faith traditions, Catholic health providers in union with the Diocesan bishop provide a voice rooted in a long tradition of responding to the diverse needs of individuals and communities. Today, the mission of Catholic health care continues through the daily work of people from a diversity of faith, social-economic and cultural backgrounds banding together within organizations to be a healing presence by attending to the body, soul and mind to all people.

DEFINING PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC HEALTH

Throughout the history of Catholic health delivery, people and organizations have consistently sought to make tangible the healing mission of Jesus through the following defining principles:

The promotion and protection of the dignity of all persons from conception until natural death.

Grounded in the dignity of all people, we believe that all are created in the image and likeness of God. Our commitment reaches out to protect and foster human life in all stages of life as a gift of God.

- **Union with the Catholic Church**

Our identity as a Catholic health organization flows from our recognition as a Catholic organization by the local bishop and our willingness to live in communion with the local bishop.

A living spirituality

Grounded in the experience that God dwells among and within us, we celebrate God's presence in our lives as individuals and as organizations. Through prayer, personal and public, celebrations and rituals we seek to deepen our trust in God's Providence and nurture our lives as we participate in the healing mission of Jesus.

- **On-going ethical reflection**

The *Health Ethics Guide* as approved by the Conference of Catholic Bishops provides a framework for ethical decision-making as well as insight and guidance for decision-making regarding the organizational, social and clinical aspects of health delivery.

- **Responsible stewardship**

The respect and care of people, organizational goods, the mission and values of the sponsor and financial resources demands prudence, creativity and fidelity from all.

- **Excellence**

As organizations devoted to the care of people, teaching and the common good of all, people expect a very high quality of service. Without a dedication to excellence rooted in compassion, the healing mission of Jesus suffers.

- **Compassionate care**

People seek our care and services at moments of vulnerability. Like Jesus, we reach out to all people with kindness, attentiveness and thoughtfulness.

- **Advocacy for the poor, marginalized and powerless**

Like Jesus who reached out to people who often found themselves abandoned, misunderstood and powerless and in need of comfort, healing and touch, we seek to bring our rich tradition of care and advocacy to those people most in need.

THE CHALLENGE OF MISSION INTEGRATION THROUGHOUT THE HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Making tangible the healing mission of Jesus through actions, attitudes and values defines the evolving mission of Catholic health care. In embracing the healing mission of Jesus, we have accepted the responsibility to assure that programs, activities and resources advance the mission and values of Catholic health care. We accomplish our mission both in shaping the particular health organization and in reaching out to meet the health needs of the community especially the poor and voiceless.

The integration of our mission and core values into all aspects of health delivery and leadership is essential to our present and future viability. As with other corporate endeavours, successful mission integration reveals itself in outcomes that are congruent with stated values, aligned with the strategic directions of the health organization and in an organizational culture that reveals its unique mission and values throughout. Part of demonstrating effectiveness in mission integration requires an agreed upon process for selection and evaluation of boards of directors as well as key leaders.

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsors of Catholic health care hold direct responsibility for approving and developing the identity, mission and values of the local organization. Additionally, Sponsors provide the historical source of an organization's identity and are responsible for ensuring fidelity to it. The Sponsors of Catholic health organizations expect that their appointed trustees and leaders to be stewards and advocates of their mission and values. Whereas mission defines the purpose and scope of a facility, core values represent the organization's essential beliefs. Core values provide focus, direction and accountability. They also create with the mission the organization's spiritual centre and a place of connection where people can find meaning and purpose in work, healing and governance.

THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP

Catholic health care is an official ministry of the Church and as such is an expression of the ministry of Christ and of the Church. Consequently, it is important for a Catholic health organization and the local bishop to work together in order to insure the authenticity and continuation of health care.

Through a process of collaboration and dialogue, the Bishop fulfills his mandate to ensure that Catholic health care reflects Catholic ethical teaching and promotes the common good of church and society. In an era of changing sponsorship of Catholic health care and collaboration between and among Catholic and other health care facilities, the engagement of the Bishop at all levels of these proposed and on-going transitions needs to occur.

In order to facilitate cooperation, understanding and communion, it is highly recommended that there be regular meetings between the diocesan bishop and the sponsor, board chair and CEO of a Catholic health facility. Also, the bishop or his representative might find participation on a local health organization's board helpful.