



CODE OF ETHICS





INTRODUCTION

This Code of Ethics is a reference tool that states the moral and civic values and principles as well as the rules of conduct adhered to by the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence (VSPCR) and the members of its Foundations' Board of Directors (hereinafter, respectively, the VSPCR and the Foundation), its senior management, all employees, volunteers, physicians and contractual workers. It is inspired by the *Act respecting health services and social services* (AHSS, Section 233), the *Charters of rights and freedoms* in effect in Quebec and the Codes of Ethics of the various professions working at the VSPCR. This Code is intended for any person who performs any duty at the VSPCR, such as Foundation Board members, employees, physicians and volunteers. Insofar as they may be concerned, this Code also applies to visitors and patients.



MISSION

In a natural, calm and serene setting, within an environment of caring professionals, the team of the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence offers end-of-life palliative care services at no cost to our patients as well as assistance to their loved ones.



VISION

To be recognized as an exemplary model for end-of-life palliative care and support services for our patients and their loved ones, while respecting the Residence's values.

THE RESIDENCE'S ETHICS PILLARS



PATIENTS' RIGHTS

The Code of Ethics states the rights and obligations of the VSPCR's patients, as well as expected practices and conduct from Board members, employees, volunteers and persons performing their duties at the Residence, including visitors and patients, where applicable.

Patients' Rights:

This Code takes into account the rights of persons at the end of life, in particular:

- a. Every person whose condition requires it has the right to receive end-of-life care (*Act respecting end-of-life care*, RSQ, c. S-32.0001, AELC, Sec. 4).

The AELC defines “end-of-life care” as palliative care provided to end-of-life patients and medical aid in dying (Sec. 3).

- b. A person of full age who is capable of giving consent to care may, at any time, refuse to receive life-sustaining care or withdraw consent to such care.

Insofar as provided for by the *Civil Code of Quebec*, a minor 14 years of age or over and, in the case of an incapable minor or person of full age, the person who can consent to care on their behalf may also make such decision.

The refusal of care or withdrawal of consent may be expressed by any means (AELC, Sec. 5).

- c. A person may not be denied end-of-life care for previously having refused to receive certain care or having withdrawn consent to certain care (Sec. 6).

This Code also takes into account patients' rights, as stated in the *Act respecting health services and social services* (AHSS), including the right to:

- a. Be treated with courtesy, fairness and understanding, and with respect for their dignity, autonomy, needs and safety (Sec. 3.3).
- b. Participate in any decision affecting their state of health or welfare (Sec. 10).
- c. Be accompanied and assisted by the person of their choice (Sec. 11).
- d. Receive care in the official language of their choice (Sec. 15).
- e. Access their record (Sec. 17) and to protect the confidentiality of their record (Sec. 19).

In addition, this Code guarantees the patients' right to:

- a. The compliance with advanced medical directives registered with the Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec.
- b. File a complaint.
- c. Receive quality palliative care without the practice of medical aid in dying at the Residence.
- d. Receive support for requests for medical aid in dying; obtain the necessary arrangements to transfer the patient to a suitable environment, thereby respecting their wishes.



EMPLOYEES' DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS

When performing their duties at and for the VSPCR, the persons subject to this Code must conduct themselves with care, caution, diligence, competence and integrity, respecting the VSPCR's values, as adopted by the Board, and its mission. This conduct includes:

- ❖ Respecting the dignity of patients, as well as that of employees, physicians, administrators, visitors and any other person performing a duty at the VSPCR.
- ❖ Avoiding any abusive, offensive, slanderous or derogatory behaviour.
- ❖ Avoiding discrimination in all its forms, including, but not limited to, any discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religious beliefs or practises, culture, age, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual disability or lifestyle.
- ❖ Ensuring the confidentiality of all the information they become aware of while performing their duties, unless authorized by senior management or the Board to share it, or sharing it is required for the operational needs of the VSPCR.
- ❖ Reporting, in a disinterested manner (without seeking to satisfy their own interests), any situation they have witnessed or encountered that endangers the health and safety of VSPCR staff and management.
- ❖ Avoiding situations of conflict of interest and immediately informing senior management or the Chair of the Board, as the case may be, of any situation that involves them directly or indirectly, or any situation that may concern another person subject to this Code.

In this respect, no one shall accept or solicit any advantage or benefit, directly or indirectly, from a person or a company dealing with the VSPCR or its Foundation or acting on behalf of or for the benefit of such a person or company, if this advantage or benefit is intended to or may influence them in the performance of their duties or to generate expectations in this regard.

Prohibited advantages include any gift, sum of money, preferential rate loan, debt reimbursement, job offer, particular favour or any other thing of considerable monetary value that compromises or appears to compromise the person's ability to make impartial decisions.

To keep the trust of the public, patients and their loved ones, and to uphold the quality of the work, the following conduct guidelines must be followed:

- ❖ Being loyal to the organization and its management.
- ❖ Working as a team in the best interest of the VSPCR.
- ❖ Abstaining from the consumption of alcohol during working hours without senior management's authorization.
- ❖ Abstaining from the consumption of drugs and narcotics during working hours, unless prescribed by a physician.
- ❖ Abstaining from coming to work under the influence of alcohol, drugs or narcotics.
- ❖ Enforcing computer system and information security rules, as described in the guidelines in effect.
- ❖ Maintaining a dress code, appearance and personal hygiene that comply with the guidelines in effect.
- ❖ Acting in a way that protects the environment, as well as immovable and movable property, and avoiding excessive use of resources and property that are exclusive to VSPCR business.



COMMITMENT OF THE RESIDENCE'S STAKEHOLDERS

Employees, volunteers, physicians, contractual workers

Upon hiring, employees, volunteers and physicians must undertake in writing to comply with this Code. Upon signing the contract, contractual workers also undertake to respect the provisions of the Code of Ethics when working at or for the VSPCR.

Administrators

Administrators must undertake in writing to comply with this Code within 60 days of taking up their duties.



TRANSPARENCE

In its annual report, the VSPCR must mention all founded cases of persons who contravened this Code that have been reported to it and on which a decision has been rendered, or is pending, while keeping confidential the identity of the persons involved.



DEFINITIONS

In this Code, unless the context indicates otherwise:

- ❖ ***Board***: means the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

- ❖ ***Chair of the Board***: means the person acting as Chair of the Board of Directors.

- ❖ **Code:** means the Code of Ethics of the VSPCR as presented in this policy and as may be amended by the Board from time to time.
- ❖ **Company:** means any form that may be taken by an organization involved in the production of goods or services or any other business of a commercial, industrial or financial nature, and any group promoting certain values, interests or opinions or exerting an influence upon VSPCR or Foundation authorities.
- ❖ **Conflict of interest:** means, among other things and without limiting the legal scope of the term, any situation in which the direct or indirect interest of a director, employee, physician, volunteer or any other person subject to this Code is such that they are at risk of compromising the objective performance of their duties because their judgment may be influenced, or their independence affected, by the existence of this interest.
- ❖ **Director:** means a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation.
- ❖ **Foundation:** means the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence Foundation.
- ❖ **Senior management:** means the Executive Director of the VSPCR.
- ❖ **VSPCR:** means the Vaudreuil-Soulanges Palliative Care Residence.

