

RCN Ethical Impact Assessment Tool

As a guide in deciding on a course of action or planning a piece of work, follow these steps and ask yourself these questions:

1) Recognise the event, decision or issue

- Are you being asked to do something that you think might be wrong?
- Are you aware of potentially illegal or unethical conduct on the part of others?
- Are you trying to make a decision and are unsure about the ethical course of action?

2) Think before you act

- Summarise and clarify your issue
- Ask yourself, why the dilemma?
- Consider the options and consequences
- Consider who may be affected
- Consult others

3) Decide on a course of action

- Determine your responsibility
- Review all the relevant facts and information
- Refer to applicable RCN policies and professional standards
- Assess the risks and how you could reduce them

- Contemplate the best course of action
- Consult others

4) Test your decision

- Apply the RCN's mission and values to your decision
- Make sure you have considered RCN policies, and relevant legal and professional standards
- Consult others – enlist their opinion of your planned action
- Consider how your decision might be reported in the media
- Will it reflect positively on nursing and the RCN?

5) Proceed with confidence

- Communicate the decision and rationale to stakeholders
- Reflect upon what was learned
- Share your success stories with others