

Statement of Common Values

In living our mission, we strive to deliver compassionate, high-quality, affordable health care; serve and advocate for those sisters and brothers who are poor and disenfranchised; and partner with others in the communities we serve to improve the quality of life. In carrying out our healing ministry, we embody the values of dignity, collaboration, justice, stewardship, and excellence.

Dignity

Holding the value of dignity means we show respect for persons, not for anything they do or any rank they hold, but because they reflect the face of God. Because persons are created in communities, respecting dignity also means working toward the common good within the communities we serve. The common good is realized when economic, political and social conditions protect and promote the basic rights of all persons and enable them to reach their common goals. We respect the dignity of all persons without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture, race, ethnicity, gender identity or economic, immigration or employment status. We believe that health care is a social good and a community service and that access to health care is a fundamental right of all persons.

For Dignity Health, respecting the dignity of persons requires reverence at every stage of life's journey from conception to natural death. Therefore, direct abortion is not performed. Reproductive technologies in which conception occurs outside a woman's body will not be part of Dignity Health's services. This includes in vitro fertilization.

In the context of a mutually respectful and healing relationship with the physician and the clinical team, patients have the right to make medical decisions, including accepting or rejecting treatment, and must give free and informed consent before any intervention. They also have a right to make an advance directive and to name a surrogate decision maker, and they or their surrogates must have access to medical and other information regarding their care. At the same time, patients have a right to privacy--of their persons and of their medical information—and must be able to trust that our record-keeping and information systems are reliable and safe. Patients' families are an integral part of their care, and patient advocates are welcome. There is no obligation to begin or continue treatment, even life-sustaining treatment, if from the patient's perspective it is an excessive burden or offers no reasonable hope of benefit. Death is a sacred part of life's journey; we will intentionally neither hasten nor delay it. For this reason, physician-assisted suicide is not part of Dignity Health's mission. Although pain management in all its forms is critical in allowing a person to die comfortably and with dignity, palliative care is consistent with all types of treatment and is not limited to those persons who are at the end of life.

We attend to all dimensions of the person and consider professional spiritual care essential to our service. Spiritual care encompasses the full range of spiritual services integrated with patient care, including skilled listening presence that assists people of all faiths and those of no faith to tap their own beliefs, values and spiritual practices as they experience illness, trauma, recovery and loss. Consistent with the spiritual foundation of our legacy, we extend this spiritual care to families and coworkers as well as patients.

Collaboration

We understand that the social fabric is woven in partnership with all who are called to serve the community. Our ability to realize our mission depends on our relationships and linkages with others: health care providers, community leaders, physician organizations, government agencies, employers, health plans and individuals.

Ours is a community of service and work—we recognize our complex responsibilities as health care providers to patients and their families, as employers, and as corporate citizens. Our commitment to collaboration fosters recognition of richness in diversity of culture and experience.

Statement of Common Values Continued

The provision of health care is characterized by necessary hierarchies and by many rules and regulations; however, collaboration marked by trust, transparency and commitment to continuous improvement means that our best work is accomplished by teams of moral equals, with respect for one another's personal and professional gifts. Collaboration among spiritual leaders and communities of faith extends our ability to support the religious preferences and spiritual needs of those we serve. Our commitment to advocate for reasonable and accessible care for all who need it requires us to engage actively in the development of health care networks and avenues that better ensure the health of populations.

Justice

The American ideal of blind justice is balanced at Dignity Health by a biblical sense of justice that is concerned with righting imbalances of power and that expresses a preferential option for the poor. We have a special responsibility for persons who are poor or vulnerable, helping them through direct service and acting as an advocate to change structures oppressive to them. We have a moral responsibility to participate in efforts to reform the national health care system that will result in a more equitable distribution of health care goods and a more rational use of common resources.

Dignity Health treats employees—the hands and heart of the ministry—justly and respectfully, recognizing that a meaningful and humanizing work environment gives people a voice in matters affecting their work; respects and promotes their personal health and professional growth; and provides a just wage. We strive to promote a just culture and workplace relationships that are fair, trusting, and accountable.

Stewardship

Stewardship is the protective care we give our treasures in order to pass them on to the next generation. Our treasures are our human and financial resources, our environment, our heritage, and the trust the public places in us. We guard the safety and integrity of these things carefully.

Health care resources belong to the community and as a health care system we are stewards of those resources with the responsibility to use them in a way that advances the health status of the community. In addition, we acknowledge our common duty to be stewards of the earth, and we recognize that we must use the earth's resources in ways that are equitable and ecologically sound. When resources are scarce, we have the responsibility to prioritize their use fairly and publicly.

Excellence

Motivated by compassion and professional integrity, we strive to provide the best care for every patient, at the right time, in the right setting, at an appropriate cost. We recognize that consistency in the way patients with similar conditions are treated is more likely to lead to better outcomes and, with humility and determination, we participate actively in opportunities to improve our service. We strive to implement evidence-based practices in order to promote safe, high-quality, efficient care that puts patients and their families at the center.

Resolution of Unforeseen Issues

Dignity Health's founders are women religious, for whom contemplation and action are linked in every decision. That tradition has come down to us in the way we go about making important, values-based decisions, specifically in the use of a discernment process that requires significant aspects of the decision be weighed in light of our core values. We try to be sure that stakeholders—people who are affected by the decision—can contribute appropriately to the decision. Options are considered in light of the core values, and after a period of reflection and respectful discussion, a decision is made that balances and honors the relevant values. This process is especially important when decisions are complex, or when the values involved may conflict. When issues that are unanticipated in this document arise between Dignity Health and its partners, we expect all to contribute to a decision that serves the common good.