Ethics Committee

Role
The Ethics Committee (EthC) reports to Council. The purpose of the committee is to advise on ethics and equity issues related to medical education, research, clinical practice, corporate issues, public policy and other matters pertinent to specialty medicine.

Responsibility and Authority
The EthC supports Council by:

- advising on issues related to the CMA’s medical code of ethics adopted by the Royal College;
- reviewing Royal College policies and programs (existing or in development) with an ethical lens to ensure consistency with Royal College principles and values;
- responds to requests by Council, the Executive Committee of Council (ECC) and others as appropriate, and collaborates when necessary with relevant organizations on ethics and equity issues;
- identifying, reviewing and bringing forward issues of ethical importance deserving the attention of Council and the ECC;
- sustaining and enhancing the Bioethics Curriculum and other bioethics educational resources, as appropriate; and
- adjudicating submissions for the KJR Wightman Award for Scholarship in Ethics.

Composition
The EthC has 8 voting members including the Chair. The members are predominantly Fellows but include individuals with expertise in philosophy and health law. In addition, a representative from the Canadian Medical Association’s (CMA) Ethics Committee, a representative from a National Specialty Society, and a representative from College of Family Physicians of Canada’s (CFPC) Ethics Committee, will be invited to attend regularly as non-voting members.

Individuals from other organizations, such as the Collège des médecins du Québec, and the Resident Doctors of Canada (RDoC) may be invited to attend meetings as guests when appropriate, and as such shall not be counted for the purposes of establishing quorum.

Key Competencies and Characteristics
Committee members should have either formal training and/or experience related to ethics, and possess the ability to review, revise, and edit written materials.
Term of Office
The usual term of office of the chair is two years, renewable once (maximum four years). The usual term of office of members is two years, renewable twice (maximum six years). All terms shall begin and end at the time of the Annual Meeting of the Members when vacancies need to be filled.

Meetings
Meetings will be held twice per year. Meetings may be face-to-face or via webinar.

Quorum consists of a majority of the voting members of the committee (i.e., 50% plus one). The chair is counted as a voting member in constituting quorum. However, as the presiding official of the committee, the chair does not move motions. Furthermore, the chair shall only vote when the vote is conducted by secret ballot or when it is necessary to break a tie.

Appointment to a Royal College committee carries significant responsibilities and requires absolute discretion. Committee members shall not divulge, re-produce, or release any confidential information except when authorized by the Royal College. Committee members are permitted to download a copy of committee materials for use solely for the purposes of the Committee. All downloaded materials must be deleted once used for the intended purpose.