5. Using the Ethical Decision-Making Cycle

This Practice Tool is designed to help professionals work through an ethical dilemma step by step. The cycle can be used individually or with a group.

It is important to consider the situation or issue and determine whether it is a legal or ethical matter, or both.

If there are legal or regulatory implications it is necessary to take immediate action as prescribed in relevant documentation.

Use the steps in the Ethical Decision-Making Cycle below to support addressing the ethical implications of the dilemma.

1. **Identify** the facts, such as who is involved, where it happened, what was said or what happened.
2. **Consider** the different positions or perspectives of all those involved.
3. **Form a response** based on your knowledge of the ECA Code of Ethics and of the specific contexts for the issue.
4. **Discuss** your proposed response with another colleague, a small group, or the staff team.
5. **Decide** on the action you will take or your response.
6. **Reflect** on the outcomes and re-plan the response process if necessary.

With an ethical dilemma in mind, work through each of these steps, making notes in the boxes.