

Code of Ethics of the Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association

1. Introduction

1.1 This code has been compiled by the Ethics Committee of the Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association and relates to the standards of practice of Naturopaths of the Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association.

1.2 This Code of Ethics describes the professional standard of conduct expected of Naturopaths so as to preserve and enhance the reputation of the A.N.P.A., the practice of naturopathy and to protect the general public.

1.3 This Code applies to all Naturopaths who are members of the A.N.P.A.

1.4 The Ethics Committee reserves the right to amend the Code of Ethics as and when it is deemed necessary.

2. Duty of Care

2.1 The primary professional duty of a practitioner is to competently assist the patient to optimum health, with the circumstances of the patient's condition.

2.2 The practitioner shall always maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and duty of care to the patient.

2.3 Under no circumstances shall a practitioner knowingly undertake any action or treatment that would adversely affect the health of a patient or fellow human being.

3. Professional Conduct

3.1 The practitioner shall have respect for the religious, spiritual, political and social views of any individual irrespective of race, age, sex, colour, ethnic origin, differing abilities, sexuality, creed, marital status, culture, political views or social standing.

3.2 Proper conduct must always be paramount in practitioners' relations with patients. Practitioners must behave with courtesy, respect, dignity and discretion. Their attitude must be competent and sympathetic, hopeful and positive, thus encouraging an uplift in the mental outlook of the patient and a belief in a progression towards good health practices.

3.3 A practitioner should not enter into an intimate or sexual relationship with a patient whilst the patient is under their care.

3.4 A practitioner can practice only the natural and/or traditional therapy disciplines in which she/he is accredited.

3.5 The practitioner is to recognise a responsibility to give the generally held opinions of the relevant discipline when interpreting and conveying scientific or empirical knowledge to patients or to the general public, and where one presents any personal opinion which is contrary to the generally held opinion of the discipline, clearly indicate that this is so.

3.6 A practitioner shall not provide false information on documents used for health fund rebate purposes.

3.7 The practitioner shall not use unsafe or improper practice.

3.8 Practitioners shall at all times show due respect and cooperate with practitioners of other disciplines.

3.9 Practitioners must never claim to "cure". The possible therapeutic benefits may be described as "recovery", but this must never be guaranteed.

3.10 A practitioner shall at no time take part in, or promote any activity, verbal or otherwise, which will reflect improperly or denigrate the standing of Naturopathy or the A.N.P.A. within the general community or in any professional circles.

3.11 Practitioners should ensure that they are medically, physically and psychologically fit to practice.

3.12 A practitioner should not attend to a patient or clinic whilst under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substance that would impair their judgement. It would be considered inappropriate for a practitioner to smoke or consume a tobacco product in the clinical setting.

3.13 A practitioner shall not use their professional connections or affiliations in an unconscionable manner.

3.14 A practitioner shall not knowingly breach the Commonwealth Therapeutic Goods Act and Regulations, or the equivalent State legislation.

3.15 A practitioner shall be aware of notifiable diseases pertinent to their state or territory legislation.

4. Confidentiality

4.1 A practitioner may not disclose information obtained in confidences from or about a patient unless consent has been given.

4.2 Patient records are kept confidential at all times and access restricted to the practitioner or assistant, except:

(a) in an emergency or other urgent situation where the information may prevent possible injury to the patient or the other person

(b) where required to do so by the law.

5. Patient Record

5.1 The public are entitled to expect that a practitioner will maintain a good standard of practice with full records. This includes: (a) name, address, telephone, date of birth; (b) details of health history; (c) dates of treatment; (d) details of remedies prescribed.

5.2 Patient records are to be kept indefinitely in safe and secure storage.

6. Advertising

6.1 A practitioner shall not advertise or lay claim to secret or exclusive methods of treatment.

6.2 In the advertising of a practitioner's skills and services, due regards should be paid to the following:

(a) Practitioners shall not use titles or descriptions that give the impression of medical or other qualifications to which they are not entitled.

(b) A practitioner shall only advertise in a proper and professional manner for the purpose of informing members of the general public as to their location details and areas of specialised practice.

7. Stationery

7.1 A practitioner is responsible for the issue of their own receipts and their own personal receipt books.

7.2 A practitioner shall not allow their receipt books to be shared or used by other practitioners (including unqualified practitioners).

7.3 Under no circumstances shall a practitioner allow their provider number to be quoted or used by another practitioner (including unqualified practitioners).

7.4 Receipt books should be kept in a safe and secure manner.

7.5 The association will investigate any alleged evidence of fraudulent use of receipt books and, if necessary, take appropriate disciplinary action.

8. Breach of Code of Ethics

8.1 A breach of any aspect of this Code of Ethics will make the practitioner subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the mechanism described in the Complaints Unit and Disciplinary Tribunal of the A.N.P.A.

9. Professional Indemnity Insurance

9.1 Members of the Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association who are currently in practice must have adequate Professional Indemnity Insurance cover.

