Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics for Registrants sets out guidelines for ethical acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine practice. The code is based on a set of core values, which registrants must uphold in their relationships with their clients, members of their own profession, other health care providers, and the public.

Registrants are professionals who act in a manner that enhances the reputation of, and inspires public confidence in the profession. They have a responsibility to follow this code of ethics, and to keep informed about the laws and developments in professional standards that affect ethical health care practice.

1. Health and well-being

a) Responsibility to clients

- Registrants hold the health and well-being of their clients as a primary responsibility.
- Registrants provide care within their scope of practice to assist their clients to achieve their optimum level of health at all stages in life.
- Registrants seek additional information or knowledge and refer the client to another health care provider in accordance with the requirements of the regulation, or when aspects of the care required are beyond their level of competence.

b) Responsibility to the public

- Registrants address institutional, social and political factors influencing health and health care in ways that are consistent with their professional role and responsibilities.
- Registrants provide the best care circumstances permit even when the need arises in an emergency.

- Registrants participate, to the best of their abilities in research and other activities that contribute to the ongoing development of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine knowledge. Registrants participating in research observe College sanctioned guidelines for ethical research.

c) Responsibility to other health care providers

- Registrants respect and value the knowledge and skills of other health care providers and cooperate with others so that maximum health benefits to their clients can be realized.

2. Choice

a) Responsibility to clients

- Registrants fully inform their clients about the effects and risks of treatment, and of the scope and limitations in which they are entitled to practice.
- Registrants ensure that care is authorized by informed consent and practice within relevant law governing consent and choice.
- Registrants find out their clients' needs and values, and help them to obtain appropriate information about their care and the services available to them.
- Registrants involve clients in health planning and health care decision making, in order to promote their clients self determination and ability to act on their own behalf in meeting their health care needs.

b) Responsibility to clients of diminished capacity

- Registrants involve clients of diminished competence in decision-making, to the extent that those clients are capable.
- Registrants seek to obtain consent for care from a substitute decision-maker when clients lack the capacity to make decisions about their care, did not make their wishes known prior to becoming incompetent, or for any reason it is unclear what the client would have wanted in a particular circumstance. When prior wishes of an incompetent client are not known or are unclear, care decisions must be in the best interest of the client and based on what the client would want, as far as is known.

3. Respect

a) Responsibility to the clients

- Registrants are sensitive to, and respectful of the clients' individual needs, values, dignity and choices.
- Registrants do not exploit clients' vulnerabilities for their own interests or gain, whether sexual, emotional, social, political, financial, or any other way.
- Registrants respect the privacy of clients when care is given.
- Registrants protect the clients' confidentiality, and the confidentiality of their health care information.

b) Responsibility to the public and members of the profession

- Registrants act in a manner that is respectful of other Registrants as well as the practice of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine.

4. Fairness

a) Registrants apply and promote principles of equity and fairness to assist clients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their needs.

5. Accountability

a) Responsibility to the clients

- Registrants practice only while their ability to do so is unimpaired.
- Registrants do not compromise care for reasons of personal or institutional expedience.
- Registrants strive to ensure that their clients receive and understand complete and accurate information about their treatment.
- Registrants never create client vulnerability or dependence through misleading a client by claiming ability to "cure".
- Registrants take preventative as well as corrective action to protect clients from unsafe, incompetent or unethical care.
- Registrants whether they are engaged in clinical, administrative, research, or educational endeavours, have professional responsibilities and accountabilities toward safeguarding the quality of care their clients receive.

- Registrants maintain complete and accurate patient records.

b) Responsibility to the profession

Registrants acquire new skills and knowledge in their area of practice on a continuing basis, as necessary for the provision of safe, competent and ethical care.

c) Responsibility to other health care providers

- Registrants refer only to other health service providers whom they do not suspect of unethical conduct or incompetent or unsafe care.

d) Responsibility to the public

- Registrants represent their qualifications honestly, clearly and in a way that is not misleading to the public, other professionals and to their clients.
- Registrants provide information to the public about acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine that is fair, accurate, and objective.

6. Practice environments conducive to safe, competent and ethical care

a) Responsibilities to the client and members of the health care team:

- Registrants establish and promote health care environments that are conducive to safe, competent, ethical practice and to the health and well being of clients and others in the setting.
- Registrants share their knowledge with any members of a health team with whom they should work, for the benefit of clients.

b) Responsibilities to other Registrants:

- Registrants provide responsible and respectful mentoring and guidance for the professional development of students of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine and other Registrants.

c) Responsibilities to persons under supervision:

- Registrants assume full responsibility for all the care they provide