



**COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONS
COMPLEMENTARY TO MEDICINE**

Code of Practice

Dietetics

CPCMM/ETA

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Code of Practice – Dietetics

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Professional Conduct for Dietitians is to provide a set of principles that apply to dietetic personnel at all levels, including students. It requires dietetic practitioners to undertake their duties and responsibilities in a professional, ethical and moral manner.

1. Dietitians will always recognize respect and uphold the autonomy of patients: i.e. the patients' right to make choices and to work in partnership with dietitians. Dietitians will promote the dignity, privacy and safety of all patients/clients/users.
2. Dietitians must not engage in or condone behaviour that causes mental distress or physical harm. Such behaviour includes neglect, intentional acts, indifference to the pain or misery of others and other malpractice.
3. Dietitians have a duty to take reasonable care of patients and to ensure that any intervention is likely to be of benefit to the patient/client/users.
4. Dietitians shall only accept referrals which they deem to be appropriate and for which they have the resources.
5. Dietitians will provide an equitable service to all patients/client/users.
6. Services provided by dietitians should be patient centred and needs led.
7. Dietitians should keep accurate records.

8. Dietitians are ethically, morally and legally obliged to safeguard confidential information relating to patients/client/users. * (*Exceptional circumstances may prevail where disclosure of patients' details may be made with valid consent or legal justification.)
9. The highest standards of personal integrity are expected of dietitians.
10. Dietitians will not enter into relationships that exploit or abuse patients sexually, physically, emotionally, financially, socially or in any other manner.
11. Dietitians should not criticise any colleague in public.
12. Dietitians must conduct themselves in a professional manner appropriate to the setting.
13. Dietitians must not be under the influence of any toxic substance which is likely to impair the performance of their duties.
14. Dietitians must not accept favours, gifts or hospitality from patients, their families or commercial organisations when the offer might be construed as an attempt to gain preferential treatment.
15. Dietitians must give a true account of their qualifications, education, experience, training, and competence and the services they can provide.
16. Dietitians may make direct contact with potential referring agencies to promote their services.

17. To qualify for registration, applicants shall achieve and maintain high standards of competence; including competence in:

- Knowledge of dietetics;
- Dietetic process and professional reasoning;
- Professional relationships, autonomy, accountability;
- Education skills;
- Research and development in dietetics and its science;
- Management and promotion of dietetics; and
- Communication skills.

18. Dietitians who delegate treatment or other procedures must be satisfied that the person to whom these are delegated is competent to carry them out. Such persons may include students, support workers or volunteers. In these circumstances, the dietitian will retain ultimate responsibility for the patient/client/users.

19. Dietitians will respect the needs, working practices, skills and responsibilities of others with whom they work.

20. It is the responsibility of individual dietitians to develop their knowledge and skills and keep themselves up to date.

21. Dietitians have a professional responsibility to participate in the education of dietetic students.

22. Dietitians shall promote an understanding of, and contribute to, the development of dietetics.

It is highly recommended that every Dietitian carries out Continuing Professional Development.

References

British Dietetic Association: Code of Professional Conduct - May 2004.

European Federation of the Association of Dietitians (2009) European Dietetic Competence and their performance indicators.

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