

Code of Ethics

Preamble

The ethical behaviour of dentists and certified dental assistants (CDAs) is one of the most important factors in the delivery of quality patient care and is one of the public's primary expectations of professionals. Continued public trust in the dental profession, and in the principle of self-regulation, is dependent on individual dentists and CDAs maintaining these standards of ethical conduct.

Core Values

The *Code of Ethics* is comprised of 5 Core Values followed by 13 Principles that build on these Core Values.

Autonomy

Understand and respect patients' rights to make informed decisions based on their personal values and beliefs.

Beneficence

Maximize benefits and minimize harm for the welfare of the patient.

Compassion

Act with respect, sympathy and kindness to all patients while addressing their concerns and alleviating their pain.

Fairness

Treat all individuals, patients, colleagues and third parties without prejudice or discrimination in a just and equitable manner.

Integrity

Be truthful; behave with honour and decency while upholding professional standards.

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Principles

The Principles provided below are based on the Core Values of autonomy, beneficence, compassion, fairness and integrity and outline the expectations for ethical dental practice.

- 1** The paramount responsibility of a dentist or CDA is to the health and well-being of the patient.
- 2** Provide care with respect, dignity and without discrimination.
- 3** Be truthful and obey all applicable laws.
- 4** Commit to the highest level of professionalism by maintaining current knowledge and competency.
- 5** Respect the right of patients to be cared for by the dentist of their choice.
- 6** Provide appropriate and timely care that is consistent with the standards of the profession.
- 7** Obtain informed consent and provide unbiased explanation of options with associated benefits, risks and costs before proceeding with diagnostic or therapeutic modalities.
- 8** Recognize limitations and refer patients to others more qualified when appropriate for the well-being of the patient.
- 9** Never overstate or embellish abilities and qualifications, or engage in any activity, including advertising or speech that could mislead a reasonable person.
- 10** Maintain a safe and healthy office environment.
- 11** Patients should be informed of their oral health status without disparaging remarks about prior services or circumstances.
- 12** Maintain appropriate and dignified boundaries in relationships with patients.
- 13** Protect the confidentiality of the personal and health information of patients.