

North American Society of Homeopaths

Code of Ethics and Rules of Practice

This code applies to Registered Members of the North American Society of Homeopaths.

Its purpose is to establish and maintain standards of practice of Homeopathy by encouraging integrity and responsibility in the practice of homeopathy. It involves having regard for the needs of patients/clients seeking homeopathic treatment, the reputation and advancement of homeopathy and the development of understanding among homeopaths. It is important for the health and growth of our profession that we honor our teachers, our history and our traditions. It is also important that we attend to our own health and well-being as well as our continued growth and professional development.

1.0 Responsibility to Patients/Clients

- 1.01 The highest standards are to be observed in the conduct and care of the patient/client.
- 1.02 All patients/clients are to be treated with respect, dignity and freedom from prejudice.
- 1.03 The homeopath owes loyalty to her patient and should have regard for his/her wishes.
- 1.04 The homeopath shall encourage their patients/clients to take increasing responsibility for their own healing and learning as and where appropriate.

2.0 Confidentiality

- 2.01 The homeopath shall keep full records of each patient. See Record Keeping Guidelines: Appendix C. All records shall be kept in a secure locked and confidential space at all times, access being restricted to the homeopath and his/her assistants. **All records shall be kept for a minimum of ten years.**
- 2.02 The homeopath shall not communicate in any form the contents of the patient/client case records or any information obtained within the practitioner/patient relationship, except as follows:
 - (a) *in response to a valid court order*
 - (b) *in an emergency or other dangerous situations where, in the opinion of the homeopath, the information may assist in the prevention of possible injury to the patient or to another person. Disclosure may be required where*
 - 1. *there is reasonable suspicion of child or elder abuse*
 - 2. *there is a reasonable suspicion that the patient presents a danger to him or herself or to others.*
 - (c) *where the patient has consented in writing to the nature and extent of the disclosure. See General Consent Form: Appendix D.*

- 2.03 **Written consent must be obtained from the patient in order to consult with another colleague, i.e. health care practitioner or homeopath (in a general rather than a specific capacity). This is covered by the General Consent Form.**
- 2.04 The homeopath shall not make or sign any false or misleading certificates or reports. No report shall be given to a third party without the consent of the patient concerned.
- 2.05 Written consent must be obtained from the patient in order to consult with the patient/client's other health care practitioners. See Authorization for Release of Information: Appendix E.
- 2.06 The homeopath shall honor the confidentiality of all patients/clients whose cases are used in published articles, case conference presentations, or training lectures (by withholding/changing names and all identifying details). A written consent form must be obtained from the patient/client in order to teach, present or publish any part of a patient/client's case history (written/video) See Authorization to Publish or Teach: Appendix F.
- 3.00 Scope of Practice
- 3.01 Where the homeopath considers that the treatment is beyond his/her capacity or skill, the patient with the homeopath's consent shall refer to or consult with a homeopathic colleague or appropriate health care practitioner.
- 3.02 The professional homeopath is obliged to advise their patient/client to maintain a relationship with his/her primary health care physician.
- 3.03 The homeopath shall not exaggerate the gravity of a patient/client's condition nor make any promise as to the result of the treatment, to the patient or to anyone else.
- 3.04 **Each patient must be informed that the goal of the professional homeopath is to help strengthen the constitution and thereby raise the general level of health of the patient/client. It is not to treat any particular disease or condition but to stimulate the vital force. See General Consent Form.**
- 3.05 Assistance shall be rendered to patients/clients in emergency situations to the extent permitted by the training and circumstances of the homeopath.
- 3.06 The homeopath shall make clear to the patient the exact nature of their training and credentials in any adjunct therapies that may be appropriate in addressing the patient/client's needs.
- 3.07 A homeopath may not make a physical, **medical** examination of a patient/client unless trained and licensed to do so in the state in which he/she practices. A **physical, medical** examination of a child under 16, if required, must be carried out in the presence of a parent/guardian (responsible adult).

4.00 Professional Conduct and Representation

- 4.01 The homeopath shall not use the title “Doctor” so as to falsely represent that he/she is a registered medical doctor unless licensed as an MD, DO, ND, DC, OMD, etc., by the state in which he/she practices. An assistant shall not be referred to as a nurse unless he/she is licensed by the Nursing Licensing Board of the state.
- 4.02 Clear boundaries need to be observed by both parties to a therapeutic relationship. A homeopath shall not engage in any sexual activity with a patient/client under his/her care. Only after the formal or therapeutic relationship has been concluded, with full agreement and understanding on both sides, may any other kind of relationship be contemplated.
- 4.03 On deciding to retire or move from a practice, the homeopath shall inform all patients/clients of his/her intention do so and of any arrangements made for the transfer of the practice to another homeopathic practitioner.

5.00 Responsibility to the Practice of Homeopathy

- 5.01 The professional homeopath is responsible for his/her continuing personal and professional development by undertaking further training and study, conferring with colleagues and acquiring knowledge of new theories and practices. See Continuing Education Credits: Appendix A.
- 5.02 The homeopath shall promote the art and science of homeopathy through appropriate research.
- 5.03 The homeopath shall administer a substance, for the purpose of a homeopathic proving, only to those individuals who have volunteered and understood the nature of the proving process. Each volunteer shall sign a written consent to that effect. See Consent to Participate in a Proving: Appendix G.
- 5.04 The homeopath shall report all research findings and clinical experiences methodically, honestly and without distortion. All speculative theories shall be stated as such and clearly distinguished.
- 5.05 A homeopath shall not seek to attract business unfairly and unprofessionally, in any way which could discredit the reputation of homeopathic practice. See Standards of Practice Guidelines: Appendix B.

6.00 Responsibility to Maintaining the Integrity of the Professional Community

- 6.01 The honor and reputation of the homeopathic profession comes from the integrity and respect that is maintained by each member of the homeopathic community towards each other.
- 6.02 The homeopath shall not disparage or speak disrespectfully of any fellow practitioner, homeopathic or otherwise, in public, or to patients/clients, or students.
- 6.03 **We are obliged to stand up for the practice of good, classical homeopathy and to express a concern about the use of high dilutions (homeopathic medicines/remedies) that are not according to Hahnemannian principles (without disparaging any person or persons).**

- 6.04 Homeopaths shall support and assist each other in their study and practice.
- 6.05 In writing or speaking, if the homeopath is aware that he/she is directly using a colleague's ideas, he/she shall reference these accordingly and give due respect to his/her fellow homeopaths.
- 6.06 In the case of a patient transferring from one homeopath to another, it is the responsibility of the new homeopath to advise and encourage the client/patient to inform their former homeopath. **The homeopath shall obtain records from the previous homeopath with permission from the patient/client.** See Authorization for Release of Information.
- 6.07 A homeopath is responsible for assuming an influential position as a teacher or mentor and must interact with students appropriately. He/she shall avoid any fraternization which exploits that position of influence.
- 6.08 Clear boundaries need to be observed by both parties during a teach student association. A homeopath shall not engage in any sexual activity with a student under his/her tutelage or supervision. Only after a formal relationship has concluded, with full agreement and understanding on both sides, may any other kind of relationship be contemplated.
- 6.09 Where a professional homeopath has a good reason to believe that a fellow homeopath has acted irresponsibly or has any complaint whatsoever about him/her, he/she should attempt to discuss the matter with the homeopath concerned as a first step and in full confidentiality. Subsequently he/she should send a written complaint to the Board of Directors. According to the procedures laid down in the bylaws,

“upon receipt of a written complaint, the President and a member of the Board of Directors or any officer of the Society, shall review the complaint; and upon their concurrence that an infraction might have been committed, the matter will be referred to...the Ethics Committee.

The committee shall notify the member named in the complaint by certified mail and shall set forth the facts and circumstances therein alleged. A hearing shall be scheduled in not less than ten (10) nor more than sixty (60) days following said mailing, at which time the member shall be encouraged to respond to the complaint. The Ethics Committee is vested with the power and authority to conduct whatever investigation is deemed necessary and proper.

The individual homeopath shall be notified of each complaint and of each decision and of a member's rights at each step of the process. The homeopath involved has the right to be present and to present testimony with legal counsel at any formal hearing held by the committee investigating the complaint...A member who has violated any of the provisions of the Code of Ethics of the Society, may be subject to censure, suspension, or expulsion.”

Attachments

Appendix A: Continuing Education Credits

Appendix B: Standards of Practice Guidelines

Appendix C: Record-keeping Guidelines

Appendix D: General Consent Form

Appendix E: Authorization for Release of Information

Appendix F: Authorization to Publish or Teach (Written/video)

Appendix G: Consent to Participate in a Proving