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Australian Register of Homoeopaths Ltd

Code of Professional Conduct

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Adopted by the Board on 1 March 2002.

Last amended 1st March 2009.

Code of Professional Conduct

The following Code applies to all homoeopaths registered by the Australian Register of Homoeopaths.

Each homeopath shall:

1. Provide safe and competent health care
2. Practice in accordance with relevant laws
3. Support patients to make informed decisions
4. Preserve confidentiality
5. Place the welfare of patients above self-interest
6. Maintain professional knowledge and skills
7. Maintain required Standards of Practice
8. Engage in practice only while in a fit condition
9. Observe professional boundaries
10. Maintain professional integrity and personal conduct
11. Observe duty of disclosure

1. Provide Safe and Competent Health Care

Homoeopaths shall fulfil their duty of care towards patients, and shall:

- do everything in their power in their capacity as practitioners to improve the health and well-being of their patients
- practice in accordance with the National Competency Standards for Homoeopathy
- refer patients to another practitioner wherever patients may benefit from this, the practitioner can no longer help the patient, or the patient's condition repeatedly fails to respond to treatment over a reasonable period of time
- offer every practicable assistance when the patient desires a second opinion
- respond to any emergency and render such assistance as possible until the emergency has passed or until another practitioner has assumed responsibility for the patient
- attempt to minimise physical or emotional harm to patients.

2. Practice in Accordance with Relevant Laws

Homeopaths shall be familiar with all applicable laws relevant to clinical practice to ensure that they do not engage in practices prohibited by such laws, or delegate practices to others that are prohibited by those laws.

3. Support Patients to Make Informed Decisions

Homoeopaths shall provide patients with reliable information and professional opinions in order to assist them to make informed decisions about treatment.

A Homoeopath shall not proceed with a course of treatment unless the Homoeopath is sure that the patient understands the purport and nature of the course of treatment.

4. Preserve Confidentiality

Homoeopaths shall as far as is practicable comply with the provisions of Commonwealth and State Privacy Acts in so far as these relate to members of the Health Services industry.

5. Place the Welfare of Patients Above Self-Interest

In relation to clinical practice, the welfare of patients, students, research subjects and the public shall take precedence over a practitioner's self-interest and the interests of employees and colleagues, in accordance with normal consulting practice.

In particular, Homoeopaths shall refrain from exploiting patients or misinforming them in relation to health care products. When providing advice regarding any product or service in a professional capacity, Homoeopaths shall fully explain the advantages and disadvantages of the product and alternate products so that the patient can make an informed choice.

6. Maintain Professional Knowledge and Skills

Homeopaths shall participate in educational activities that develop and maintain their competence and professional performance throughout their working lives, to the level required by the Continuing Professional Development Guidelines of the Australian Register of Homoeopaths. Such activities shall include those necessary to ensure that Homoeopaths are cognizant of and up to date with all applicable laws relevant to clinical practice.

7. Maintain Required Standards of Practice

Homoeopaths shall at all times conduct their practice in accordance with the Standards of Practice as approved and amended by the Australian Register of Homoeopaths from time to time.

8. Engage in Practice Only When in a Fit Condition

Homoeopaths shall not engage in practice while their judgement or performance is impaired for any reason, including while:

- under the influence of alcohol or psycho-active drugs
- of unsound mind
- unwell to the extent that their judgement or performance is impaired.

9. Observe Professional Boundaries

Homoeopaths shall maintain professional relationships with patients and in particular shall refrain from unnecessary or inappropriate physical examination, and from engaging in sexual activity or sexual behaviour with a current patient.

10. Maintain Professional Integrity and Personal Conduct

Homoeopaths shall at all times conduct their practice and affairs in a dignified and responsible manner consistent with this Code and the AROH Standards of Practice so as not to bring the Homoeopathic medical profession into disrepute. In the event of the practitioner becoming aware that a sexual relationship with a patient may occur, the practitioner will cease in his/her capacity of practitioner and refer the patient to another practitioner.

This provision will also be breached where a Homoeopath has been found guilty in the courts of:

- a criminal offence as defined by the criminal law of that state or territory and which would directly reflect on the good character of the individual in his/her capacity as a Homoeopath;
- an offence where the practitioner's ability or fitness to continue practice is likely to be affected;
- or where the Homoeopath has admitted to such an offence.

11. Observe Duty of Disclosure

A Homoeopath shall report immediately to the Australian Register of Homoeopaths within 21 days of becoming aware of possibly having breached this code.