



CODE OF ETHICS

DENTURIST ASSOCIATION OF BC

CODE OF ETHICS

Purpose:

- (A) a general statement of the principles of honorable conduct which are required of members in their professional and personal lives in order to fulfill their duties to the public, to their patients, to the profession, and to their professional colleagues; and
- (B) some specifics of required standards and prohibited actions, as a guide to honorable conduct.

It is emphasized that the specifics are only examples of the broad principles upon which members of the profession must appraise and govern their own conduct.

Broad Principles

To uphold and advance the honor and dignity of the dental profession and its high standards of ethical conduct, members must:

- (a) be honest and impartial in serving their patients, the public, and their profession;
- (b) strive to increase the competence and prestige of their profession;
- (c) use their knowledge and skill to improve the health and well-being of their patients and the public; and
- (d) respect the dignity and professional status of, and professional relationships with, their colleagues.

General Duties

Every member is charged with the duty to uphold the honor and dignity of the profession.

Duties to the Public.

Members, as members of a health profession, owe a duty of service to the public and, in rendering this service, must maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior. Service to the public includes, without limitation:

- (a) Education. Members are encouraged to educate the public in the promotion of dental health.
- (b) Community activities. In their practices, members have opportunities to meet many people and to appreciate the interests and problems of a large cross-section of the population. Accordingly, they are encouraged to take an active interest in community affairs, and particularly to provide leadership in those activities whose purpose is to improve the health and well-being of the individual and the community.
- (c) New discoveries and patents. No member may keep secret for private advantage any advance or discovery in any branch of dental science. Such advance or discovery must be made common knowledge, for the advantage of humanity, the profession, and the progress of science, through journals and scientific publications.

- (d) False declarations. Members, in their capacity as such, must not make any statement or declaration or sign any certificate or any other document, or induce or permit a patient to sign any certificate or document which they know or ought to know to be untrue, misleading, or otherwise improper.

Duties to the Patient

The first consideration of members must be the health and welfare of their patients, and to each they must give their utmost in service. Service to patients includes, without limitation:

- (a) Personal information confidential. Information about a patient which members may acquire in their practices must be kept in utmost confidence, except as may be necessary to divulge such information in order to protect the welfare of the individual or the community, or as may be required by law.
- (b) Dental emergencies. Members have an obligation to consult and to provide treatment to any member of the public
- (c) Duty to keep knowledge current. All members, for so long as they practice, must keep their knowledge of the art and science of dentures contemporary and must treat patients in accordance with then current generally accepted professional standards. To this end, members are encouraged to read and learn from professional journals, and attend local association meetings, college annual meetings, and such post-graduate courses as may be necessary for those purposes.
- (d) Treatment. Members must render treatment only in accordance with then current generally accepted professional standards, except that members may use experimental methods and materials in treatment:
 - (i) within the bounds of accepted scientific criteria
 - (ii) Members must clearly inform patients treated by experimental means that they are involved in an experiment and of the range and possible results and problems of the experiment.
- (e) Consulting on treatment plans. Members may treat patients only when they are qualified by training or experience to carry out the treatment plan. Members must always be willing to check their diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis by consultation with fellow practitioners or specialists in the field of dentistry or medicine pertaining to the case under consideration. Members must be willing to refer a patient when advisable.
- (f) Use of auxiliary personnel. Members must protect the health of their patients at all times by not delegating or referring any duty or procedure to a person who is not qualified to perform such duty or procedure by skill and training.
- (g) Proper records and transfer of records. Members must keep adequate records of their clinical findings, diagnosis, and treatment with respect to each of their patients. When a colleague who is presently treating a patient requests records from another member who has formerly treated the patient, the former member must make copies of those records available to the attending member except if the patient has instructed otherwise.
- (h) Fees for services, and methods of compensation. Members are entitled to reasonable compensation for their services on a fee for service basis subject to the following:

- (i) members must not decrease fees to any particular patient because that patient does not have a dental plan or similar third party coverage, or for any like reason, and must not increase fees to any particular patient because that patient has a dental plan or similar third party coverage, or for any like reason,
- (ii) no member, either directly or indirectly, may participate in any plan, scheme, arrangement, or contract practice, or do anything which might or would:
- (iii) have the legal or practical effect of limiting, or interfering with a person's freedom or ability to choose his practitioner
- (iv) result in compensation for the member's services such that the member would not or would not be likely to render adequate services to a patient, in accordance with then current generally accepted professional standards.

Duties to the Profession.

Members must uphold the honor and integrity of their profession. Duties to the profession include, without limitation:

- (a) Advancement of profession. Members are encouraged to support actively the advancement of the profession through local, provincial, and national associations.
- (b) Market advocacy. Members must not lend their names or written testimonials, whether for reward or not, to any product or material offered to the public whatever its merits. It is precisely because they are members that their advocacy may have extra market value.
- (c) Advertising. In open public situations, discounting or couponing of denturist services, whether by dollar amount or percentage is strictly prohibited.
 - i) Any reported advertisements of this nature will be reviewed by the DABC executive committee.
 - ii) Committee decision may result in loss of membership to the DABC
 - iii) The only service exempt from this bylaw is a consultation.

Duties to Colleagues.

In relationships with their colleagues, members must conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner. Duties to colleagues include;

- (a) Judgments. Members may not comment or pass judgment on the qualifications of, or procedures rendered by, other members except:
 - (i) if such comment is in the best interests of the patient's oral health.
- (b) Competition. Members must not compete for patients or professional services by methods which would adversely affect the honor, dignity, or prestige of the dental profession. A member maintains his practice by having a well-merited reputation for professional ability and probity.
- (c) Competence. Members must not compare their professional competence to that of other members.