

"THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF  
NATURAL MEDICINE PRACTITIONERS INC."



## CODE OF ETHICS

### UNDERTAKING BY PRACTITIONERS

Being mindful of the terms and legitimate expectations of 'The Alumni Association of Natural Medicine Practitioners Incorporated' under its Constitution, each Member of the Association, as a Practitioner, solemnly undertakes to the best of his or her ability to consciously endeavour to comply with the following Principles of ethical behaviour.

### PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR OF PRACTITIONERS

These Principles and Articles of 'ethical behaviour' are applicable to all Practitioners of 'The Alumni Association of Natural Medicine Practitioners Incorporated' (the "Association").

**Principle 1:** to consider at all times as the primary duty and responsibility, and first priority, the health and well being of patients.

**Principle 2:** to place integrity and professional ability as an essential component of the primary duty and responsibility.

**Principle 3:** to endeavour to improve professional knowledge and skills in order to afford patients the best possible advice and treatment.

**Principle 4:** to recognize one's own limitations, and the special skills of others, in the prevention and treatment of ill health.

**Principle 5:** to honour and respect professional Colleagues, upholding the Profession of Natural Medicine and its ongoing traditions.

**Principle 6:** to protect the confidences of patients even after their death, unless a legal duty of disclosure operates to remove such confidentiality.

### **Standards of Practise**

Article 1: Practise the science and art of Natural Medicine (however described) to the best of one's ability and with honesty, compassion and respect for human dignity; in each case providing a Natural Medicine Service in accordance with the generally accepted standards expected of Practitioners who provide a service of that kind.

### **Examination of patients to be complete and thorough**

Article 2: As far as practicable and within one's capabilities, ensure that all patients receive a complete and thorough examination into their complaint or condition.

### **Records of treatment to be kept accurately**

Article 3: Ensure that accurate records are kept of any diagnoses and treatments afforded to any patients and, without unreasonably refusing or denying a person access to any records that pertain to them, allow reasonable access to those records.

### **Professional conduct**

Article 4: Ensure that professional conduct within the accepted practises of the Natural Medicine Profession is above reproach, and that no physical, emotional or unfair financial advantage is taken of any patient.

### **Professional service without discrimination**

Article 5: Recognize the responsibility vesting in each Practitioner is to render Professional service to any person regardless of race, colour, religion or political belief and, so long as it lies within the limits of expertise and legal allowance as a Natural Medicine Practitioner, render that service regardless of the nature of the ill health suffered by patients.

### **Patients to be informed of their state of health**

Article 6: Recognize and accept the rights of all patients to be informed of the nature of any form of ill health from which they are known to suffer, the probable cause of that ill health (if known) and its available or possible treatments.

### **Patients' rights to choice of Practitioner**

Article 7: Without seeking to unduly influence any decision made by a patient, allow that patient the right to choose his or her Practitioners freely.

### **Alternative Professional opinions to be sought**

Article 8: Recognize one's professional limitations and, where appropriate, recommend to the patient that additional or alternative opinions or services should be obtained.

### Confidential information not to be divulged

Article 9:

- (1) Keep in confidence all information obtained from a patient, or from a colleague in relation to a patient.
- (2) Except where a legal requirement operates to the contrary, divulge that information only with the express permission of the patient.

### Recommendations of particular therapies

Article 10: Recommend to a patient or the guardian of a patient only those lawful and necessary procedures that are for the patient's well being and that may assist in the care of the patient.

### Exchange of information with patients

Article 11: Exchange with patients information that is necessary for them to make informed choices regarding appropriate treatment and, where requested, assist patients by supplying information that may enable them to receive any benefits to which they may be entitled.

### Urgent medical care requiring assistance

Article 12: Where an urgent need for medical care occurs, render all possible assistance to any patient, within the limits of one's abilities, until other appropriate medical personnel can assume the responsibility for the patient.

### Standards of Professional services

Article 13: Strive to improve the standards and quality of professional Natural Medicine Services that are provided to the general community.

### Health, safety and education

Article 14: Within the lawful limits of providing professional Natural Medicine Services, recognize the Profession's responsibility to society in matters relating to –

- (a) health and safety of the public;
- (b) education in natural medicine; and
- (c) relevant legislation relating to the health or well being of the community.

### Witness in Court

Article 15: Where a Practitioner is a witness in a case before a Court, recognize the responsibility for assisting the Court in arriving at its just and proper decision.

### Society attitudes in matters of conscience

Article 16: Accept that it is not the role of an individual Practitioner to determine society's attitudes in contentious issues or matters of conscience, but endeavour to protect patients and safeguard the legal rights of Practitioners within society generally.

### **Cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment**

Article 17: Regardless of the various society attitudes, Practitioners shall not countenance, condone or participate in the practice of torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman, degrading or experimental procedure.

### **Duty to patients overrides loyalty to employers**

Article 18:

- (1) Practitioners must at all times regard their duty to their patients as overriding any perceived loyalty to an employer or other organization.
- (2) In particular, Practitioners must not allow the commercial interests of an employer or health provider to interfere with:
  - (a) free exercise of clinical judgement in determining appropriate methods of meeting the needs of individual patients;
  - (b) cooperation with other health providers that may be in the interests of a patient;
  - (c) completion of any treatment given; or
  - (d) publication or provision of honest reports of their services as provided to patients, as well as their aims and their achievements.

### **Acting against the public interest**

Article 19:

- (1) Practitioners shall not act against the public interest; or
- (2) Practitioners shall not, by default or participation, sanction those that employ them to act against the public interest.

### **Standards of care not to be compromised**

Article 20: Standards of care should not be compromised in order to meet perceived financial or commercial requirements whether set by Practitioners personally or by particular organizations.

### **Additional self-education**

Article 21: Continue additional self-education to improve one's technical skills and the professional standards of treatment and care of patients.

### **Denigration of the reputation of other Practitioners**

Article 22: Avoid impugning or denigrating the character or reputation of another Practitioner.

### **Unprofessional conduct to be reported**

Article 23: Ensure that professional conduct is beyond reproach and consider the responsibility of reporting to the appropriate body of peers any conduct by a colleague considered to be unethical, unprofessional or unbecoming to the Natural Medicine Profession, or which may require disciplinary proceedings to be instituted.

### Refusal to treat patients

Article 24: Whilst accepting the existence of a responsibility for one's personal health and safety (whether mental or physical) -

(a) except in the event of an emergency - have the right to refuse to accept patients, particularly where one's skills are insufficient to provide appropriate professional service; and

(b) in any situation other than an emergency - have the right to withdraw from the responsibility for the care of any patient, provided that the patient is given adequate notice of this intention and appropriate alternative care is reasonably available.

### Contracts to maintain professional integrity

Article 25: Only enter into a legal contract with a person or an organization if it does not compromise the continued maintenance of professional integrity.

### Contractual terms to be equitable

Article 26: Only offer to a colleague or a prospective student a legal contract which has terms and conditions that are equitable to both parties, and refrain from knowingly entering into any unconscionable or illegal contracts, or contracts with minors.

### Personal opinions not to contradict generally held opinions

Article 27: Recognize the responsibility to give generally held opinions of the Natural Medicine Profession when interpreting and conveying scientific or empirical knowledge to patients or to the general public, and, where one presents any personal opinion which is contrary to the generally held opinion of the Profession, clearly indicate that this is so.

### Methods and substance of professional advertising

Article 28:

(1) While building a professional reputation based upon ability and integrity, only advertise professional services or make professional announcements where the main purpose is to convey the factual presentation of information reasonably needed by any person to make an informed decision about the appropriateness and the availability of services that may meet his or her medical needs.

(2) Any such advertisement (however conveyed) -

(a) must be demonstrably true in every respect;

(b) shall not contain any testimonial or endorsement of clinical skills; and

(c) shall be conducted in a professional manner and shall not be effected or communicated in any manner so as to discredit the Natural Medicine Profession or bring, or be likely to bring, the Natural Medicine Profession into disrepute.

### Advocacy of commercial products with historical or evidence based knowledge

Article 29: Advocacy of any particular commercial product must have historical or current evidence of safe usage.

### Benefits of new discoveries to be made available

Article 30: Ensure that any new therapeutic or diagnostic method is described through the professional channels of the Natural Medicine Profession and the benefits, if proved, are made available to Practitioners at large.

### Secret or unknown remedies

Article 31: Refrain from the use, supply, or administration, of any remedy generally unknown to the Natural Medicine Profession.

### Opinions to be sought in difficult cases

Article 32:

(1) Request the opinion of an appropriate colleague acceptable to a patient if diagnosis or treatment is difficult or obscure, or if the patient requests it.

(2) Having requested the opinion of a colleague in a particular case, make all relevant information available to that patient accordingly and indicate clearly whether the colleague is to then assume the continuing care of that patient during the period of the patient's ill-health.

(3) During a period of ill health, a Practitioner should refrain from treating patients until good health is resumed, and during that period the Practitioner should consider referring a patient to a colleague.

### Report of findings after referrals

Article 33:

(1) Where, in respect of a patient, an opinion has been requested by a colleague, report in detail your findings and recommendations to the referring Practitioner and, if required, provide the patient with an appropriate report of those findings.

(2) Continue with the ongoing care of the patient only at the specific request of the referring Practitioner and with the consent of the patient in question.

### Assistants and delegates to be competent and qualified

Article 34:

(1) Ensure that any persons assisting in the care of a patient are properly qualified to do so.

(2) Ensure that any Practitioner to whom care of a patient is delegated is fully competent to carry out that care.

### Report of findings to be made available

Article 35: Upon the request of a patient, make available to a colleague a report of the findings and treatment of the patient.

### Established relationships to be preserved

Article 36: Recognize that an established relationship between a Practitioner and a patient is valued to such an extent so as to dictate that it should not be disturbed unless there are compelling reasons to do so.

### **Profit motives not to influence professional judgement**

Article 37: A Practitioner shall never allow motives of profit to be permitted to influence the free and independent exercise of professional judgement on behalf of a patient.

### **Course advertisements for Approved Teaching Establishments**

Article 38: Practitioners involved in teaching shall only advertise courses in an honest and professional manner and without, either expressly or impliedly, denigrating, casting aspersions upon, or calling into question, any other teaching establishment, its teachers or its teaching or teaching methodologies.

### **Imparting of knowledge - acceptable particulars**

Article 39: Practitioners and other persons engaged for the purposes of imparting knowledge and experience to students of the Natural Medicine Profession shall impart only the reasonable or well accepted particulars of the several and various subjects undertaken for study and shall not seek to impart any grossly obscure, unreasonable or unfounded peculiarities of those subjects so as to encourage or enthuse students to practise or unduly rely upon those peculiarities.

### **Duty of Teachers**

Article 40: Lecturers and tutors shall recognize their duty to assist each student with equal favour and shall not take, or attempt to take, any unfair advantage whatsoever over any students to whom, or by whom, a responsibility to teach has been entrusted.

### **Duty of Examiners and Academic Boards**

Article 41: Examiners and Members of an Academic Board or Registration Board (however described or established) –

- (a) shall treat each and every person with equality of consideration; and
- (b) shall not favour, or seek to favour, any one person over any other.

### **Teachers and Tutors to be competent and qualified**

Article 42: In relation to any course of training or instruction concerning any subject matter of the Natural Medicine Profession, Practitioners shall not use, or procure the use of, the services of any students in any teaching, lecturing or tutorial capacity, unless -

- (a) those students are Practitioners in their own right; or
- (b) those students -
  - (i) have the appropriate qualifications and training in relation to the relevant subject matter concerned; or
  - (ii) have clearly demonstrated an equal ability for instruction and teaching of a kind that would, but for their status as a student, be acceptable and reasonable in relation to the particular subject matter in question.