

Introduction

This Code of Ethics of the College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC (the “College”) is a general guide to provide registrants with the College’s expectations of ethical conduct. It outlines professional standards to allow for the proper discharge of services provided by audiologists, hearing instrument practitioners, and speech-language pathologists to their clients and to protect the integrity of the professions.

This Code should be construed as a general guide and not a denial of the existence of other duties equally imperative or other rights not specifically mentioned. Any act or omission by a registrant that is in violation of the spirit and purpose of this Code may be found to be unethical conduct.

PRINCIPLE 1

A registrant must provide professional services and conduct research with integrity and reliability, and ensure that the dignity, individuality, and rights of the client are safeguarded.

PRINCIPLE 2

A registrant must make the welfare of a client the registrant’s primary concern.

- 2.1 A registrant must not attempt to provide assessment/diagnostic or treatment services for which they have not been adequately prepared, nor may they misrepresent their training or competence.
- 2.2 A registrant must not provide unnecessary or futile services including administering unnecessary assessment/diagnostic tests, accepting persons for treatment if benefit cannot reasonably be expected to accrue, and continuing treatment if benefit cannot reasonably be expected.
- 2.3 A registrant must be professionally responsible for all treatment and services rendered by the registrant or by other personnel, including students who are under the direct supervision of the registrant. A registrant must not delegate any service requiring professional competence to unqualified personnel.
- 2.4 A registrant must utilize every available resource by initiating appropriate referrals to other professionals whose knowledge may contribute to the diagnosis, assessment, and/or treatment of those served.

PRINCIPLE 3

A registrant must maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the information and records of those receiving services or involved in research, as required by either the Personal Information Protection Act or the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,

whichever may apply.

- 3.1 A registrant must not reveal any information regarding a client's condition or any professional services performed for a client to any person other than the client without the consent of the client or his/her legal guardian/representative, unless required to do so by law or the College.
- 3.2 A registrant must not allow case material, case records, or audio-visual material to be used in teaching or mass media communication in a way that permits identification of a client, without the written consent of the client or his/her legal guardian/representative.

PRINCIPLE 4

A registrant must provide accurate information about the nature and management of communicative disorders and about the services provided and products offered.

- 4.1 A registrant must provide accurate information regarding the nature and treatment of the client's communication disorder and the possible effects of professional services and products that the registrant has provided or proposes to provide to the client or the research being proposed or conducted.
- 4.2 A registrant may make a statement of prognosis, but must not guarantee results, mislead, or misinform persons served or studied.
- 4.3 A registrant must conduct and report product-related research only according to accepted standards of research practice.
- 4.4 A registrant must conduct teaching and/or research activities without invasion of privacy or failure to inform the client fully about the nature and possible effects of the activities. All persons must be afforded free choice of participation.
- 4.5 A registrant must maintain documentation of professional activities that include but are not limited to the nature, extent, duration and outcome of services provided.

PRINCIPLE 5

A registrant must recognize and accept his/her responsibilities to the public and the profession, and must do everything within the registrant's means to provide for the enhancement and development of the profession.

- 5.1 A registrant should assist in the education of the public regarding speech, language, and/or hearing problems and other matters falling within their professional competence.

- 5.2 A registrant should establish harmonious relations with registrants of other professions, endeavoring to inform other professions of the services and products that can be rendered by registrants of the speech and hearing health professions and, in turn, should seek information from registrants of related professions.
- 5.3 A registrant should seek to advance services for individuals with communication disabilities and assist in establishing and maintaining high professional standards for such programs.
- 5.4 A registrant must not misrepresent any information relating to the practice of the professions of speech-language pathology, audiology or hearing aid dispensing, or regarding the provision of such services or products to individual clients or the public.

PRINCIPLE 6

A registrant must avoid activities that constitute a conflict of interest. Should a registrant identify himself/herself to be in such a conflict, the registrant is responsible for the prompt resolution of the conflict.

- 6.1 A registrant must not exploit any clinical relationship with a client or others to further his/her own physical, emotional, financial, political or business interests at the expense of the best interest of the client or others, or compromise the honour of the profession or reduce the effectiveness of the services that the registrant provides.
- 6.2 Without limiting the generality or scope of section 6.1, a registrant must not:
 - a. use coercion or take advantage of any relationship of trust or dependency to engage in professional misconduct of a sexual nature with a client;
 - b. initiate or continue treatment of a client if such treatment it is ineffective, unnecessary or no longer indicated;
 - c. breach or nullify a professional contractual agreement without cause;
 - d. disparage the skill, knowledge, or services of another registrant;
 - e. charge fees for services that were not rendered.
- 6.3 Unless a registrant obtains the consent of the registrant's employer, a registrant who is employed by a public health authority or agency must not
 - a. provide or offer to provide private for-fee services or products to someone who is a client of the registrant's employer; or
 - b. refer someone who is a client of the registrant's employer to another registrant who is also employed by the same employer so that the second registrant may provide private for-fee services or products to that client.

- 6.4 A registrant must not secure or accept referrals or clients by providing, directly or indirectly, any significant incentives, financial or otherwise, to other colleagues, professional or referring sources.

PRINCIPLE 7

A registrant must uphold the dignity of the profession and freely accept the College's self-imposed standards.

- 7.1 A registrant must not violate or attempt to circumvent the Code of Ethics.
- 7.2 A registrant must not engage in dishonest or illegal conduct that adversely reflects the profession.
- 7.3 A registrant must notify the Inquiry Committee when the registrant has reason to believe that another registrant of the College has violated the Code of Ethics.
- 7.4 A registrant has the responsibility to advise and cooperate with the Inquiry Committee during investigations of complaints concerning alleged violations of the Code of Ethics.

Related Documents

College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC, Bylaws (2009), www.cshhpb.org

Government of British Columbia, *Health Professions Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c.183, Victoria, BC: Queens Printer, www.bclaws.ca