



# Code of Ethics

11 December 2014

## Preamble

The New Zealand Audiological Society believes that Members of the Society must uphold and preserve standards of integrity and ethical principles. These standards and principles are necessary for the responsible discharge of obligations in the profession of Audiology. Therefore, the Society has created a Code of Ethics to describe the most basic of principles and rules considered essential for Members to adhere to.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Ethics the following definitions apply:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>Authorised person</i>	A person who has authority given to them to undertake a role or task by written consent. When the person cannot give written consent, other legally appropriate means must be relied upon to obtain authorisation. The NZAS is an authorised person for the purposes of investigating a complaint.
<i>Member</i>	This Code of Ethics applies to every Member of the Society as defined by the Constitution of the New Zealand Audiological Society, this includes those who are: a) Provisional Members b) Full Members c) Student Associate Members d) Associates (who are not otherwise members) e) Audiometrist Members f) Honorary Members
<i>People</i>	The Code uses the term “people” as an umbrella term to include client, consumer, patient, customer, individual or person. The term “people” can also include whanau.
<i>Services</i>	The term “services” includes clinical and support services and the dispensing of products.

## Introduction

The standards of integrity and ethical principles are described as the Principles of Ethics and Rules of Ethics. They include the responsibilities owed to the people served, their whanau, to the public, and to the profession of Audiology.

The Principles of Ethics are general, aspirational and inspirational in nature. They form the underlying moral basis for the Code of Ethics. Members of the Society must observe these principles as affirmative obligations in all aspects of their professional activity.

Rules of Ethics are specific statements of minimally acceptable professional conduct. They do not purport to be an exhaustive list of the rules that Members must abide by.

The Constitution requires Members to agree to comply with the Code of Ethics. The Constitution also empowers the Executive Council to develop, promote, and enforce the Code of Ethics. Therefore, the Executive Council may find that a Member is in breach of the Code of Ethics where the Member has breached a specific Principle or Rule of Ethics, and/or has acted in a way that is contrary to the spirit and purpose of a Principle or Rule of Ethics.

## Principles of Ethics 1

Members must honour their responsibilities and hold paramount the rights, needs and dignity of the people they serve professionally.

### Rules of Ethics

- 1.1 Members must provide all services competently.
- 1.2 Members must exercise all reasonable precautions to avoid injury to persons being served professionally
- 1.3 Members must use every resource, including referral when appropriate, to ensure that high-quality service is provided to all people they serve professionally.
- 1.4 Members must proactively enable the people they serve to freely choose the source of services rendered or products dispensed.
- 1.5 Members must not discriminate in the delivery of professional services on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or general health.
- 1.6 Members must fully inform the people they serve of the nature and possible effects of services rendered and products dispensed.
- 1.7 Members must evaluate the effectiveness of services rendered and of products dispensed.
- 1.8 Members must only provide services or dispense products when benefit can reasonably be expected.
- 1.9 Members must not guarantee the results of any treatment or procedure, directly or by implication; however, they may make a reasonable statement of prognosis
- 1.10 Members must not evaluate or treat hearing disorders solely by correspondence.
- 1.11 Services provided or products dispensed must be part of a programme of comprehensive rehabilitative care.
- 1.12 Members must maintain adequate records of all professional services rendered and products dispensed. They must allow access to these records to appropriately authorised persons.
- 1.13 Members must strive to achieve a collaborative relationship with the people they serve professionally.
- 1.14 Members must not reveal, without authorisation, any professional or personal information about any person served professionally, unless required by law to do so, or unless doing so is necessary to protect the welfare of the person or the community.

- 1.15 Members must charge only for services rendered or products dispensed. Members must not misrepresent<sup>1</sup> the services they render or products they dispense in any way.
- 1.16 Members must inform the persons that they serve of any professional fees and/or charges in advance of rendering such services or dispensing products. These fees and/or charges must not be excessive in relation to the services rendered or products dispensed.
- 1.17 Members must not use any person in research or as a subject of teaching demonstrations unless they have obtained that person's informed consent.
- 1.18 Members must withdraw from professional practice when substance abuse or an emotional or mental state may adversely affect the quality of the services they render.

## **Principles of Ethics 2**

Members must strive to achieve and maintain the highest level of professional competence

### **Rules of Ethics**

- 2.1 Members must engage in the provision of clinical services only when they hold the appropriate Certificate of Clinical Competence, or when they are in the certification process and are supervised by a member who holds the appropriate Certificate of Clinical Competence.
- 2.2 Members must be aware of the extent of their own clinical competence. They must only engage in aspects of the profession that are within the scope of their competence, considering their level of education, training and experience.
- 2.3 Members must continue their professional development throughout their careers.
- 2.4 Members must not delegate the provision of clinical services unless the delegation is to a person who is certified or is in the education or certification process and is operating within their scope of practice.
- 2.5 Members can delegate certain support services to a person who is trained and is being appropriately supervised. However, the member must ensure that those delegated to provide such services operate within the limits of their delegation.
- 2.6 Members must strive to ensure that staff members provide services that do not exceed the staff member's level of education, training, and experience.
- 2.7 Members must ensure that the testing environment, facilities and equipment are fit for purpose.

## **Principles of Ethics 3**

Members must honour their responsibility to the public by promoting public understanding of the profession, by supporting the development of services for people with hearing difficulties and by providing accurate information in all communication involving any aspect of the profession.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this Code of Ethics, misrepresentation includes any untrue statements or statements that are likely to mislead. Misrepresentation also includes the failure to state any information that is material and that ought, in fairness, to be considered.

## Rules of Ethics

- 3.1 Members must not misrepresent<sup>2</sup> their credentials, competence, education, training, or experience.
- 3.2 Members must not misrepresent diagnostic information, services rendered, or products dispensed.
- 3.3 Members must not engage in any scheme to defraud.
- 3.4 Members' statements to the public – concerning the nature and management of hearing disorders, about the profession, and about professional services – must be accurate.
- 3.5 Members' statements to the public - advertising, reporting research results, and promoting products – must not contain misrepresentations.

## Principles of Ethics 4

Members must provide the highest standard of independent professional services. The Audiological profession has assumed a responsibility to serve important social interests, requiring an independence from the effects of commercial pressures.

## Rules of Ethics

- 4.1 Members must maintain professional independence at all times. This means acting in the best interests of the people they serve, free from all potential, apparent, or actual financial conflicts of interest, however they arise or are structured.  
  
Accordingly, audiologists must have the freedom and discretion to present appropriate options to the people they serve and then, if appropriate, make recommendations on whatever brand or model of hearing aid and other related accessories will best meet the person's needs. It is then up to the person to make a choice as to which, if any, they select.
- 4.2 Audiologists dispensing hearing aids must disclose all potential, apparent or actual financial conflicts of interest, however they arise or are structured.
- 4.3 Members who are employers of audiologists, and/or members who are employees of audiological clinics, must ensure that any employment agreement recognises this obligation of professional independence.
- 4.4 Members must not accept compensation in any form from a manufacturer or supplier of professionally related products for recommending any particular product.
- 4.5 Members must not give or receive any commission for arranging a consultation with other professionals.
- 4.6 Members must not participate in any professional activity that constitutes a conflict of interest.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this Code of Ethics, misrepresentation includes any untrue statements or statements that are likely to mislead. Misrepresentation also includes the failure to state any information that is material and that ought, in fairness, to be considered.

- 4.7 Members must not permit their membership to be used in the sale or promotion to the public of any product related to the profession.

## **Principles of Ethics 5**

Members must honour their responsibilities to the profession and their relationships with colleagues, students, and members of allied professions. Members must strive to uphold the dignity and autonomy of the profession, maintain harmonious interprofessional and intra-professional relationships, and accept the profession's self-imposed standards.

## **Rules of Ethics**

- 5.1 Members must prohibit anyone under their supervision from engaging in any practice that violates the Code of Ethics.
- 5.2 A Member must not engage in dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or any form of conduct that adversely reflects on the profession or on the Member's fitness to serve people professionally.
- 5.3 Members must only assign credit to those who have contributed to a publication, presentation, or product. Credit must be assigned in proportion to the contribution and only with the contributor's consent.
- 5.4 Members' statements to colleagues about professional services, research results, and products must not contain misrepresentations.
- 5.5 Members must conduct themselves in their relationships with each other, and in relation to professional issues, in a way that will not bring themselves or their colleagues into professional disrepute.
- 5.6 Members must exercise independent professional judgement when providing any professional service, regardless of referral source or prescription.
- 5.7 Members who have reason to believe that the Code of Ethics has been violated are encouraged to resolve the matter at a personal level. Where the complainant has good reason to believe that such an approach is inappropriate or where the contravention is considered to be of a serious nature, the complaint should be referred to the Executive Officer who will duly forward it to the Complaints Board.
- 5.8 Members must co-operate fully with the Complaints Board in any investigation.
- 5.9 Members must co-operate fully with the Executive Council in the implementation of any findings in matters related to this Code of Ethics.
- 5.10 Members must not discriminate in their relationships with colleagues, students, and members of allied professions on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or general health.
- 5.11 Members must be aware of and comply with all relevant New Zealand law associated with their profession.

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