



## CODE OF CONDUCT

### THE PROFESSION OF PHYSIOTHERAPY

**The Namibian Society of Physiotherapy believes that physiotherapists should:**

1. Use their knowledge and skills to promote and benefit humankind.
2. Promote health for all by sharing responsibility and fostering good relationships with stakeholders for the health and health education of the nation.
3. Strive to ensure that everyone has equal access to quality health care.
4. Adhere to the principle of non-discrimination in medical care.
5. Not condone or participate in torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading procedure towards any person.
6. Treat persons held in custody in the best interests of their health and with the same concern as other patients and report maltreatment or refusal of medical services to the relevant authorities.
7. Endeavour to influence non-medically qualified practitioners to adopt safe practices.

**In terms of their commitment to appropriate patient/client relations:**

1. Foster good relationships with their patients/clients based on mutual respect, communication and trust.
2. Ensure that patient/client management is not being influenced by undue pressure from third parties.
3. Maintain their clinical independence and be vigilant in situations of dual loyalty and inform relevant professional bodies and patients/clients accordingly.

**In terms their commitment to patient/clients' rights:**

1. Respect the rights of patients/clients, including the right to informed consent, which includes discussion and information relating to their condition so as to assist informed decision-making.
2. To provide to a patient/client, upon request and in terms of relevant legislation, access to medical information in the possession of the doctor.
3. Respect the confidentiality of information entrusted to them, unless legislation or an unequivocal ethical duty compels disclosure.

**In terms of their commitment to maintain professional relations with colleagues:**

1. Recognize their own limitations and recommend to a patient/client that other opinions and services be obtained when this is considered in the best interests of the patient/client or when requested by a patient/client.
2. Make all relevant information available to the colleagues concerned, unless being expressly prohibited to do so by the patient/client after providing the patient/client with information regarding the desirability of continuity of care.
3. Report their findings and recommendations back to the referring colleague when asked to consult about a patient.
4. Take reasonable steps to consult with the health professional in charge of a case before superseding that health professional.
5. Conduct themselves in a professional manner that is beyond reproach, and take any necessary steps to correct unethical behaviour by colleagues, including reporting impairment as required by the Allied Health Professions Council of Namibia.

**In terms of their commitment to professionalism:**

1. Ensure that they are familiar with the latest requirements set in terms of ethical behavior by relevant professional bodies and effect changes through participatory and democratic means.
2. Ensure that they maintain their professional independence and integrity when entering into any contract regarding professional services; recognize that they remain personally responsible to their patients for health care; and ensure that the terms and conditions of contracts entered into are fair.

3. Ensure that information about themselves given in the course of presenting physiotherapy topics to the media or to audiences does not imply that they are the only, the best, or most experienced practitioners in a particular field. Physiotherapists should also avoid activities, which could be regarded as canvassing or touting for patients.
4. Issue certificates that are in line with the requirements set by the Allied Health Professions Council of Namibia and that constitutes a fair reflection of their professional evaluation of a patient.
5. Be aware of instances of perverse incentives so as to benefit from such consideration. Physiotherapists must recognize and disclose instances of conflict of interest.

**In terms of their commitment towards science and continuing professional education:**

1. Participate in continuing professional development in order to improve the standard of care.
2. Uphold scientific standards, promote research and create new knowledge within the frameworks of acceptable international and national standards of ethics.