

Easy-Read: Code of Conduct for Certain Health Care Workers

This is an easy-read version of the code of conduct. A full version is available at www.hcsc.sa.gov.au. If you have concerns about your treatment or care, talk to the health care worker. They will often try to resolve your concerns. If you're not able to deal direct with them, or you're not satisfied with their response, speak with the HCSCC:

Phone: 8226 8666 or 1800 232 007

Fax: 8226 8620

Internet: www.hcsc.sa.gov.au

Mail: HCSCC - PO Box 199, Rundle Mall SA 5000

Provide services in a safe and ethical manner

A health care worker must provide health services in a safe and ethical manner.

Obtain consent

Prior to starting treatment or service, a health care worker must ensure that consent appropriate to that treatment or service has been obtained and complies with law.

Appropriate conduct about treatment advice

A client has the right to make informed choices about their health care. A health care worker must not attempt to talk a client out of seeking or continuing medical treatment. They must communicate and co-operate with colleagues and other health service providers and agencies in the best interests of their clients.

Report concerns about the conduct of colleagues

A health care worker who, in the course of providing treatment or care, forms the reasonable belief that another health care worker has placed or is placing clients at serious risk of harm must refer the matter to the HCSCC.

Appropriate action in response to adverse events

Appropriate and timely measures must be taken to minimise harm to clients when an adverse event occurs during treatment or care. For example, ensure that appropriate first aid is available, obtain appropriate emergency assistance for any serious matter, promptly tell the client about what happened and take steps to reduce the risk of recurrence and, where appropriate, report the matter to the relevant authority.

Precautions for infection control

A health care worker must adopt standard precautions for the control of infection in the course of providing treatment or care.

Infectious medical conditions

A health care worker who has been diagnosed with a medical condition that can be passed on to clients must ensure that they practise in a manner that does not put clients at risk.

Claims about curing certain serious illnesses

A health care worker must not claim or represent that they are qualified, able or willing to cure cancer or other terminal illnesses. If they claim to be able to treat or alleviate the symptoms of cancer or other terminal illnesses, they must be able to substantiate such claims.

Misinforming clients

A health care worker must not engage in any form of misinformation or misrepresentation about the products they provide or the qualifications, training or professional affiliations they hold.

Alcohol or unlawful substances

A health care worker must not practice while under the influence of alcohol or unlawful substances. If taking prescription medication, they must obtain advice from the prescribing health practitioner or dispensing pharmacist on the impact on their ability to practice.

Mental or physical impairment

A health care worker must not provide treatment or care to clients while suffering from a physical or mental impairment, disability, condition or disorder (including an addiction to alcohol or a drug, whether or not prescribed) that places or is likely to place clients at risk of harm.

Financially exploiting clients

A health care worker must not financially exploit their clients.

Sexual misconduct

A health care worker must not engage in behaviour of a sexual or close personal nature with a client. They must not engage in a sexual or other inappropriate close personal, physical or emotional relationship with a client. They should ensure that a reasonable period of time has elapsed since the conclusion of the therapeutic relationship before engaging in a sexual relationship with a client.

Privacy laws

A health care worker must comply with the relevant privacy laws that apply to clients' health information, including the *Privacy Act 1988* of the Commonwealth.

Record keeping

A health care worker must: (1) maintain accurate, legible and up-to-date clinical records for each client consultation and ensure they are properly and securely stored, (2) take necessary steps to enable clients' access to information contained in their health records if requested and (3) enable the transfer of a client's health record in a timely manner when requested by the client or their legal representative.

Insurance

A health care worker should ensure that appropriate indemnity insurance arrangements are in place for their practice.

Displaying the code and other information

A health care worker must display or make available a copy of: (1) the full Code of Conduct and (2) information about how to complain to the HCSCC.