

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, PERFORMANCE AND ETHICS

This document outlines the standards of conduct, performance and ethics that must be adhered to by each Member of The Society of Sports Therapists.



THE SOCIETY OF SPORTS THERAPISTS



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STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, PERFORMANCE AND ETHICS

Introduction

One identifiable characteristic of a healthcare profession is the dedication of its members in providing a service to the patients they care for. In becoming a Member of **The Society of Sports Therapists**, an individual assumes obligations and responsibilities to act in accordance with the ideals and standards of the Sports Therapy profession.

Each Member of **The Society of Sports Therapists** must adhere to the highest standards of conduct in attending to the needs of their patients/clients. **The Society of Sports Therapists** embraces the belief that the ideals, standards and principles contained in these Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics must be adhered to by each member. Any Member who violates any of the ideals, standards or principles set forth in the Standards may be subject to disciplinary action as set out in the disciplinary procedures of **The Society of Sports Therapists**.

NB: **The Society of Sports Therapists** Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2012) incorporate and include the generic Standards of Conduct Performance & Ethics of the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC). They have been modified to reflect the specific needs of **The Society of Sports Therapists** and its Members, at this time.

Basic principles

The essential principles of these Standards are honesty and integrity. Members who reflect these characteristics will be a credit to **The Society of Sports Therapists**, the profession of Sports Therapy, the institutions or organisations they represent and to themselves. Members of **The Society of Sports Therapists** assume certain obligations and responsibilities, as identified within these Standards. **The Society of Sports Therapists** may take appropriate action with respect to any Member's violations of the provisions of these Standards, any other Byelaws passed from time to time and any other governing laws and regulation.

Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (“the Standards”)

These standards are amongst other criteria the basis against which complaints made against a Sports Therapist are assessed

Your duties as a Member of The Society of Sports Therapists

The standards of conduct, performance and ethics you must keep to:

1. You must always act in the best interests of your patients/clients.
2. You must always respect the confidentiality of your patients/clients.
3. You must always maintain high standards of personal conduct.
4. You must provide relevant information about your conduct, competence and health.
5. You must always keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date.
6. You must act within the limits of your knowledge, skills and experience and, if necessary, refer the matter to another professional.
7. You must maintain proper and effective communications with patients/clients and other professionals.
8. You must obtain informed consent to give treatment (except in an emergency).
9. You must effectively supervise tasks you have asked other people to carry out.
10. You must keep accurate patient records.
11. You must limit your work or stop practising if your health affects your performance or judgement.
12. You must behave with integrity and honesty and ensure that your behaviour does not damage the public's confidence in you or your profession.
13. You must deal fairly and safely with the risks of infection.
14. You must follow published and accepted guidelines for the advertising of your services.
15. You must ensure that your behaviour does not damage the reputation of Sports Therapy.

PRACTICE IN GENERAL

1. You must always act in the best interests of your patients/clients.

- You have a personal responsibility to promote and protect the best interests of your patients/clients.
- You must respect and take account of these factors when providing care for your patients/clients.
- You must not exploit or abuse your relationship with the patients/clients.
- You must not allow your views about a patient's/client's, age, colour, race, disability, sexuality, social or economic status, lifestyle, culture or religious beliefs to affect the treatment provided or the professional advice given.
- You must try to provide the best possible care, either alone or with other health professions.
- You must not do anything, or knowingly allow anything to be done that you have good reason to believe will put the health or safety of a patient/client at risk. This includes both your own actions and those of others.
- You should take appropriate action to protect the rights of children and vulnerable adults if you believe they are at risk, including following national and local policies.
- You are responsible for your professional conduct, any care or advice you provide and any failure to act.
- You must be able to justify your decisions if asked to.
- You must protect your patient/client if you believe that any situation puts them in danger, this includes the conduct, performance or health of a colleague. The safety of patients/clients must come before any personal or professional loyalties at all times. As soon as you become aware of a situation or circumstance that puts a patient/client at risk, you should discuss the matter with an appropriate person.

2. You must always respect the confidentiality of your patients/clients.

- You must treat information about patients/clients as confidential and use it only for the purpose given.
 - You must not knowingly release any personal or confidential information to anyone who is not entitled to it.
 - You must only use information about a patient/client when and where that person has given specific permission to be used.
- You must always check that people who ask for such information are entitled to it.

- You must adhere to the conditions of any relevant data protection legislation and always follow best practice for handling and storing confidential information. Best practice is likely to change over time and it is your responsibility to stay up to date.

3. You must always maintain high standards of personal conduct.

- You must not do anything that may affect a patient's/client's treatment or confidence in you.
- You must keep high standards of personal conduct as well as professional conduct.
- You should be aware that poor conduct outside of your professional life may still affect someone's confidence in you and your profession. Members charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence, may have their case reviewed by the Disciplinary Panel pursuant to the Disciplinary Procedures of **The Society of Sports Therapists**.

4. You must provide relevant information about your conduct, competence and health.

- You must contact **The Society of Sports Therapists** if you have any information about your conduct or competencies, or about that of other therapists you work with. In particular you must let us know immediately if you are:
 - Convicted of a criminal offence, receive a conditional discharge for an offence, or accept a police caution.
 - Suspended or placed under a practice restriction by an employer or similar organisation because of concerns about your conduct or performance.
- You should also provide information about the conduct or competence of other healthcare providers if someone who is entitled to know, asks you for it.

Furthermore, you should co-operate with any investigation or formal inquiry into your professional conduct. If anyone asks, and they are entitled to it, you should give them all relevant information in connection with your conduct or competence.

The **Society of Sports Therapists** can act against you if you are convicted of a criminal offence or have accepted a police caution.

The Society will always consider each case individually, and in accordance with our disciplinary procedures, to decide whether we need to take any further action. However, we will consider terminating your membership if you are convicted of a criminal offence or accept a police caution that involves the following types of behaviour:

- Violence
- Sexual Misconduct
- Supplying drugs illegally
- Child pornography

- Offences involving dishonesty
- Offences for which you received a prison sentence

5. You must always keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date.

- You must make sure that your knowledge skills and performance are of a high quality, up to date and relevant to your field of practice. **The Society of Sports Therapists** is also aware that you may work in a variety of settings including education, research and or clinical practice.
- You must be capable of meeting your standards of practice and proficiency.
- You need to ensure that whatever your area of practice, you are capable of practising safely and effectively. The Society's criteria for continuing professional development links your learning and development to your continued membership. You also need to meet these standards.

6. You must act within the limits of your knowledge, skills and experience and if necessary, refer the matter to another professional.

- You must keep within your scope of practice.
- You must only practise in those fields in which you have appropriate education, training and relevant experience. When accepting a patient/client you have a duty of care. This includes an obligation to refer them for further professional advice or treatment if it becomes clear that the task is beyond your own scope of practice.
- If you refer a patient/client to another practitioner, you must make sure that the referral is appropriate and that the patient understands why you are making the referral and agrees to it.
- If you accept a referral from another practitioner you must make sure that you fully understand the request and only provide treatment and or advice you believe is appropriate. If this is not the case you must discuss this with the referring practitioner and the patient/client.

7. You must maintain proper and effective communication with patients/clients and other professionals.

- You must take all reasonable steps to ensure that you can communicate effectively with your patients/clients.
- You must also communicate effectively, co-operate and share your knowledge and expertise with professional colleagues for the benefit of the patient/client.

8. You must obtain informed consent to give treatment (except in an emergency).

- You must explain to the patient/client the treatment you are carrying out, the risks involved (if any), and other treatments possible.
- You must make sure that you get the patient's/client's informed consent for any treatment that you carry out.
- You must make a record of the person's treatment decisions and, if appropriate, pass this information on to other professionals. A person who is capable of giving their consent has the right to refuse treatment. You must respect this right. You must also ensure that he or she is fully aware of the risks and consequences of refusing treatment.

9. You must effectively supervise tasks you have asked other people to carry out.

- People who consult you or receive treatment or services from you are entitled to assume that a person with appropriate knowledge and skills will carry out their treatment or provide services. Whenever you give tasks to other persons to carry out on your behalf:
 - You must be sure that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to carry out the tasks safely and effectively.
 - You must not ask them to do work which is outside their scope of practice.
 - You must always continue to give appropriate supervision to whoever you ask to carry out a task.
 - You will still be responsible for the appropriateness of the decision to delegate. If someone tells you that they are unwilling to carry out a task because they do not think they are capable of doing so safely and effectively, you must not force them to carry out the task anyway. If their refusal raises a disciplinary or training issue, you must deal with that separately, but you should never put the safety of the patient/client in danger.

10. You must keep accurate patient records.

- The making of and keeping of records is an essential part of care and you must keep records for everyone you treat or who asks for professional advice or services.
- Whenever and wherever possible they should also be contemporaneous i.e. written at that time. Handwritten notes must be complete and legible and all entries should be signed and dated.
- You must protect information in records from being lost, damaged, accessed by someone without appropriate authority or tampered with. If you update a record you must not delete information that was previously there or make that information difficult to read. Instead you must mark it in some way.

11. You must limit your work or stop practising if your health affects your performance or judgement.

- You have a duty to take action if your physical or mental health could be harming your fitness to practise. You should get advice from a suitably qualified medical practitioner and act on it. This advice should consider whether, and in what ways, you should change your practice, including stopping practising if this is necessary.

12. You must behave with integrity and honesty and ensure that your behaviour does not damage the public's confidence in you or your profession.

- You must carry out your duties and responsibilities in a professional and ethical way. Patients/clients are entitled to receive good and safe standards of practice and care.
- You must make sure that you behave with integrity and honesty and keep to high standards of personal and professional conduct at all times.
- You must not get involved in any behaviour or activity which is likely to damage your profession's reputation or undermine public confidence in it.

13. You must deal fairly and safely with the risks of infection.

- You must not refuse to treat someone just because he or she has an infection. Also, you must keep to the rules of confidentiality when dealing with people who have infections. For some infections, such as those sexually transmitted, these rules may be more restrictive than the rules of confidentiality for people in other circumstances. **The Society of Sports Therapists'** requirements regarding confidentiality are given in more detail in section 2.
- You must take appropriate precautions to protect your patients/clients and yourself from infection. In particular, you should protect your patients/clients from infecting one another.
- You must take precautions against the risk that you will infect someone else.

14. You must follow published and accepted guidelines for the advertising of your services.

- Any advertising that you do in relation to your professional activities must be accurate. Any advertisements must not be misleading, false, unfair or exaggerated.
- You should not claim that your skills, equipment or facilities are better than anyone else's unless you can prove that this is true. If you are involved in advertising or promoting any product or service, you must make sure that you use your scientific knowledge, clinical skills and experience in an accurate and responsible way.
- You must not make or support unjustifiable statements relating to particular products. Any potential financial rewards to you should play no part, at all, in your advice or recommendations for products and services that you give to patients.

15. You must ensure that your behaviour does not damage the reputation of Sports Therapy.

- You must not get involved in any behaviour or activity which is likely to damage your profession's reputation or undermine public confidence in it. You should not publicly discredit or lower the dignity of another member of **The Society of Sports Therapists** or the professional body, or any other professional body, organisation or practitioner.

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