CMA Code of Ethics and Professionalism

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Documents

CMA CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

The Code of Ethics and Professionalism articulates the ethical and professional standards of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and its members, and provides guidance for the practice of medicine. It is intended to help physicians and other health professionals uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct and professional excellence.

The Code reflects the values and principles that guide the practice of medicine in Canada and is grounded in the CMA's mission to promote and protect the health of all Canadians. It is intended to provide guidance for physicians and other health professionals in their decision-making and to promote the ethical conduct of medical practice.

The Code is intended to be flexible and to adapt to new and emerging ethical issues. It is also intended to be a living document that evolves over time to reflect changing societal values and expectations.

The Code is intended to be a guide for physicians and other health professionals in their decision-making and to promote the ethical conduct of medical practice.

A. VIRTUES EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ETHICAL PHYSICIAN

1. Trust is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and should be approached with care. Trust is earned through the physician’s demonstrated commitment to the well-being of the patient.

2. Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that information shared in the course of providing medical care be kept confidential and not disclosed without the patient’s consent.

3. Respect for patients is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians treat patients with respect and dignity, and that their decisions and actions be guided by the best interests of the patient.

4. Professionalism is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians practice in a manner that is consistent with the highest standards of ethical conduct and professional excellence.

5. Accountability is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be responsible for their actions and decisions, and that they be answerable to their patients and the public for their professional conduct.

6. Ethics is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be guided by ethical principles and values in their decision-making and professional conduct.

7. Advocacy is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be advocates for their patients, and that they be engaged in efforts to promote the health of all Canadians.

8. Integrity is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be honest and truthful in their professional conduct, and that they be committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct.

9. Competence is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be knowledgeable in their field, and that they be able to provide care that is consistent with the highest standards of medical practice.

10. Continual improvement is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be committed to lifelong learning and professional development, and that they be engaged in efforts to improve the quality of medical care.

11. Collaboration is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians work in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, and that they be committed to the principles of collegiality and teamwork.

12. Communication is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be able to communicate effectively with their patients, and that they be committed to ensuring that patients understand the information they are provided.

13. Compassion is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be able to demonstrate empathy, caring, and concern for their patients, and that they be committed to providing care that is attentive to the emotional and social needs of their patients.

14. Responsibility is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be accountable for their actions and decisions, and that they be committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct.

15. Equity is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be committed to promoting fair and just outcomes for all patients, and that they be engaged in efforts to eliminate health disparities.

16. Respect for diversity is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians respect the cultural, religious, and other values of their patients, and that they be committed to promoting respect and understanding.

17. Accountability to society is the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and requires that physicians be committed to promoting the health of all Canadians, and that they be engaged in efforts to improve the health of their communities.

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A. VIRTUES DEMONSTRATED BY THE ETHICAL PHYSICIAN

Compassion
A respect for the dignity of human beings towards all who seek their care, with a commitment to act in the best interests of each patient.

Humility
An honest and self-effacing acknowledgment of one’s own limitations and the limits of current knowledge, and a commitment to ongoing learning and improvement.

Integrity
A commitment to acting with integrity and adherence to moral and ethical principles, and a willingness to take responsibility for actions that fall short of these principles.

Fellowship
A commitment to working collaboratively and respectfully with other healthcare professionals, recognizing the importance of teamwork and the value of diverse perspectives.

Proficiency
A commitment to maintaining current knowledge and skills, and a dedication to lifelong learning and professional development.