CMA Code of Ethics and Professionalism

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Code of ethics of the Canadian Medical Association (Update 2004)

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Population health, health equity, public health

CMA CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

The CMA Code of Ethics and Professionalism articulates the ethical and professional responsibilities of physicians, health-care providers and other health professionals. It is a document of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) that outlines the principles and obligations that guide the ethical conduct of medical professionals. The Code provides guidance for ethical decision-making in a range of settings, including patient care, research, and public health. It is intended to promote the highest standards of ethical conduct and to enhance the trust that the public places in the profession.

A. VIRTUES EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ETHICAL PHYSICIAN

1. Integrity: This virtue is exemplified by the ethical physician through honesty, transparency, and accountability. Honesty involves being truthful in all communications, including in the provision of care, the conduct of research, and the reporting of results. Transparency requires being open and clear about the methods and results of research, as well as the ethical considerations involved. Accountability means taking responsibility for one’s actions and decisions, and being prepared to justify them.

2. Compassion: The ethical physician demonstrates compassion by demonstrating care, warmth, and understanding towards patients and other health professionals. This involves being attentive to the needs and concerns of others, especially those who are vulnerable or marginalized. Compassion also involves recognizing the impact of social determinants of health on patients and working to address these disparities.

3. Justice: The ethical physician upholds the principle of justice by ensuring that patients receive fair and equitable treatment. This includes being mindful of the distribution of resources and opportunities, and working to promote social justice and equity in health care. Justice also involves respecting the autonomy of patients, including the right to make informed decisions about their own care.

4. Respect: The ethical physician respects the dignity and worth of all individuals, regardless of their background, beliefs, or circumstances. This involves treating patients and colleagues with respect, and being mindful of the impact of one’s words and actions on others. Respect also involves being open to learning from others, and acknowledging the contributions of all in the field of health care.

5. Responsibility: The ethical physician is accountable for the actions of others. This involves being responsible for the safety and well-being of patients, and working to prevent harm. Responsibility also involves being responsible for one’s own professional development, and continuously improving one’s skills and knowledge.

6. Courage: The ethical physician is courageous in upholding the principles of the Code, even when it may be difficult or unpopular. This involves standing up for what is right, and being willing to challenge practices and systems that are unethical or harmful.

The Code of Ethics and Professionalism serves as a framework for ethical decision-making and provides guidance for physicians and other health professionals in their interactions with patients and colleagues. It is intended to promote the highest standards of ethical conduct and to enhance the trust that the public places in the profession.

Documents

CMA Policybase - Canadian Medical Association
CMA CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

A. VIRTUES EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ETHICAL PHYSICIAN

- Compassion
  - A personal dedication to supporting and caring for individuals needs, both physical and emotional in all facets of care, including care provided at home and in the community.

- Honesty
  - A moral obligation to truth, and to always be open and transparent in all interactions.

- Autonomy
  - A personal commitment to respecting the right of patients to self-determination and to involving them as partners in their care.

- Integrity
  - A personal commitment to the ethical use of evidence, to maintaining the public trust, and to ensuring the safety and well-being of patients.

- Prudence
  - A personal commitment to the ethical use of evidence, to maintaining the public trust, and to ensuring the safety and well-being of patients.