

## **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 The code is to provide guidelines for members. The Association recognizes that where there is a conflict between the code and state requirements, osteopaths must comply with the state legislation before the code.
- 1.2 Failure to adhere to the spirit of this code will bring the profession into disrepute.
- 1.3 This code may change demands of the profession change and members will be advised of those changes.

### **Osteopaths and Society**

- 2.1 Osteopaths render service to humanity with full respect of human dignity. Treatment shall always be in the best interest of the patient.
- 2.2 Osteopaths shall be aware they may significantly influence patients by their example.
- 2.3 Osteopaths have the right to practice with great diversity of styles. The obligation remains with the practitioner to determine the effectiveness and safety of such treatments and to acquire the skills necessary to deliver such care.
- 2.4 Advertising must not be.
  - a) misleading or designed to mislead,
  - b) likely to bring the profession into disrepute
  - c) self-laudatory or claim success, or that they are a superior practitioner, or
  - d) to denigrate other osteopaths or other healing modalities
- 2.5 In a society of unequal means, one should be aware of the need to provide affordable healthcare on an equitable basis.

### **Osteopaths and Patients**

- 3.1 Osteopaths must respect that patients have a right to share in the process of their treatment. Patients education, informed consent and communication of prognosis should be a continuous and seamless part of care.
- 3.2 Osteopaths must not breach the trust arising from professional relationships, and acknowledge the diversity of standards in modesty, candour and informality in people. One should strive to cater for those differences with appropriate sensitivity and consideration, including using gowns, withdrawal from the room and referral, as necessary.
- 3.3 They should respect all religions, ethical personal and political beliefs of patients.
- 3.4 An osteopath must not exploit his or her relationship with a patient in any way. In particular there must not be a sexual relationship with a patient during a professional relationship.
- 3.5 One should be aware that treatment of family members by osteopaths may be compromised by lack of objectivity, and lack of professional environment.

3.6 Osteopaths must appreciate the quality of the relationship between the practitioner and the patient is a major determinant of successful environment.

3.7 Osteopaths should acknowledge being part of society's healing resources and should encourage patients to participate in other modalities proven areas of success. Osteopathic care is complementary to other modes of health care in the society.

3.8 The osteopath's responsibility is to the patient and on should work with the usual professional independence and integrity and not submit to externally imposed non-osteopathic persuasion.

3.9 Osteopath's remain responsible for the patients while under their care. A practitioner has the right to refuse treatment but must offer referral to another practitioner.

3.10 Confidences entrusted in the course of treatment should remain so, and should be broken with required by law, or to protect the welfare of the individual and the community.

### **Osteopaths and professionalism**

4.1 Osteopaths should wherever possible, utilize lifestyle modifications that rely on the body's intrinsic healing systems as preferable to drugs and surgery.

4.2 Osteopaths should encourage self-sufficiency and non-dependency in their patients. Over servicing in an abuse of trust.

4.3 Osteopaths should be aware of individual limitations. With them in mind, be prepared to refer patients for review, management of for a second opinion.

4.4 Osteopaths must take all relevant information available to other practitioners when sought, subject to patient approval.

4.5 Osteopaths should seek and encourage peer review, and not "close ranks" when transgressions by colleagues impact adversely on patients. Referral should be made to the appropriate Registration Board and Health Care Complaints unit where appropriate.

4.6 Osteopaths should engage in ongoing education and updating of skills. Fulfilling any obligatory requirements as agreed by the Association is necessary.

4.7 Osteopaths can work together in many forms of working arrangements. It is good commercial practice that an agreement be drawn up, that clearly defines and formally reflects that relationship. The reasons for this are two fold. Firstly when a working relationship dissolves, one's economic position is clearly defined. Secondly in medical negligence cases only the responsibility party is sued.

4.8 Members are obliged to have Professional Indemnity Insurance.

4.9 An osteopath not must treat or care for patients while his or her ability is impaired by any mental or physical illness, alcohol or drugs.

4.10 Osteopaths must keep case notes which conform to all current medico-legal requirements for case records, and must observe all legal requirements for confidentiality in respect of storage, handling and transmission of such records and the information contained therein.