



CODE OF ETHICS

OCTOBER 2013

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This code outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all members of the Ontario Association of Osteopathic Manual Practitioners (OAO). It is to be read in conjunction with the OAO's Mission Statement, Standards of Practice and other relevant documents as well as the applicable federal and provincial legislation.

Nothing in this Code shall be construed as permitting breach of any law or interpreted in any way that would discourage a member from complying with their legal obligations (statute and common law).

The Code provides guidance for thinking about ethical issues; it cannot provide a final answer to all ethical questions that may arise during professional practice. Failure to specify any particular responsibility or practice in this Code does not negate the existence of these responsibilities or practices.

Patient values, beliefs, goals and rights

1. Members shall listen to their patients and show respect for their values, beliefs and goals.
2. Members shall respect the moral and legal rights of their patients, and shall act to ensure that these rights are respected by all staff in their employ.

Patient-professional relationship

1. Members shall value the well-being of patients over their personal interests.
2. Members shall take all reasonable steps to minimize risk to patients and to prevent harm. Members shall appropriately manage any harm that arises.
3. If an emergency arises during treatment, members shall provide appropriate assistance.

4. Members shall maintain appropriate patient-professional boundaries.
5. Members shall not discriminate against any patient on grounds of age, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed (religion), disability, family status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, medical condition, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.
6. Once a patient is accepted into the practice, members shall provide professional services until: a) they are no longer required; b) the patient declines further treatment; c) another osteopathic manual practitioner or health care professional has assumed responsibility; or d) until the patient has been given reasonable notice of the member's intent to terminate the relationship.

Informed decision-making

1. Members shall provide all necessary and sufficient information about osteopathy treatment in a manner the patient can understand, doing their best to answer questions as completely as possible. Information shall be transparent, accurate, complete, and evidence-based where possible.
2. Members shall respect the right of capable patients to give or refuse consent.
3. Members shall guide substitute decision makers in making decisions in accordance with the accepted substitute decision-making standards.
4. Members shall be attentive to unrealistic expectations, explaining to patients what can and cannot be reasonably expected from treatment.
5. Members shall not misuse the power imbalance to influence decision making. They shall inform their patients when their personal values influence their recommendations.
6. Members shall respect requests for a second opinion from a colleague or other health professional.

Privacy

1. Members shall protect the emotional and physical privacy of their patients.

Confidentiality

1. Members shall protect all personal and health information.
2. Members shall respect that patients own their health care information.
3. Members shall only disclose health information to third parties with the patient's consent.
4. Members may share information with other health care professionals within the circle of care, taking care to disclose necessary information only and to ensure information is not inadvertently conveyed to unintended parties.

Fees, remuneration

1. Members shall charge fees that are reasonable for services rendered.
2. Members shall refrain from any action that permits remuneration for referral services.
3. Members shall provide a fee schedule before initiating treatment.
4. Members shall ask for payment only after service has been rendered.

Practice

1. Members shall practice within the limits of their knowledge and skill.
2. Members shall recognize their limitations and make appropriate and timely referrals for the well-being of their patients.
3. Members shall maintain complete and accurate clinical records.
4. Members shall engage in lifelong learning to maintain their clinical skills.

Accountability

1. Members shall be accountable for their decisions, whether they result in action or inaction.

Abuse, harassment

1. Members shall refrain from behaviour that may be construed as harassment or abuse of patients, associates, or employees. They shall ensure a professional environment free of intimidation and hostility.
2. Members shall refrain from use of their authority to coerce patients, associates or employees.

Advertising

1. Members shall not engage in any activity, including advertising or speech, that could mislead a reasonable person.
2. Members shall not use patient testimonials to promote their practice.

Unethical behaviour

1. Members shall intervene promptly if any member of their practice provides incompetent care.
2. Members shall take reasonable steps to address unethical conduct by colleagues and other health care professionals.
3. Members charged with criminal acts shall report the charges as well as the court's findings to the OAO.

Collaboration

1. Members shall work collaboratively with other professionals in planning and implementation of care.
2. Members shall respect other members of the health care team, notwithstanding any philosophical differences regarding treatment, and share information with other professionals in the circle of care.

Research

1. Members shall utilize osteopathic research that contributes to improving patient outcomes and improving patient care.
2. Members shall support current research standards.

Conflict of interest

1. Members are responsible for recognizing a conflict of interest before it arises. Once they are aware of a conflict or potential conflict of interest, members shall manage it promptly and appropriately in the best interest of the patient.

Integrity

1. Members shall practice in an honest and upright manner.
2. Members shall uphold the reputation of their profession and act to preserve public trust.
3. Members shall refrain from practicing while impaired in any way.
4. Members shall clearly and accurately represent themselves, never overstating or embellishing their abilities, education, experience or qualifications.

Appendix:

Member	An active or affiliate member of the Ontario Association of Osteopathic Manual Practitioners
Shall	Obligatory, mandatory
Treatment	Anything done for a therapeutic, preventative, palliative, diagnostic, cosmetic or other health related purpose
Patient	The individual receiving treatment
Circle of care	A term used by the privacy commissioner's office to describe those health information custodians who are collecting, using or disclosing personal health information for the purpose of providing health care to a designated patient. For discussion of the defined circumstances, see: http://www.ipc.on.ca/images/Resources/circle-care.pdf
Conflict of interest	Occurs when a person in a position of trust has primary interests or obligations that require professional judgement, as well as a secondary interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective discharge of his or her primary interest (professional duties)

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The Ontario Association of Osteopathic Manual Practitioners (OAOMP)

is a not-for-profit, voluntary, professional association of Osteopathic Manual Practitioners. The OAOMP is committed to fostering the practice and professional advancement of osteopathy in Ontario.

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