



Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

CODE of ETHICS

for PHARMACISTS 2018



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Principle 1 - Make Patients Your First Concern

The care, well-being and safety of patients are at the heart of professional practice. Patients must always be your first concern. Even if you do not have direct contact with patients your decisions or behaviour can still affect patients care and safety.

Pharmacists must:

- 1.1** Ensure the product and services provided are safe and of acceptable quality.
- 1.2** Take appropriate action to protect the interest and well-being of patients and the public.
- 1.3** Gather the information required to assess a patient's needs to provide the appropriate treatment and care.
- 1.4** Ensure the facilities, equipment and resources are available and in acceptable condition to provide appropriate professional services.
- 1.5** Inform and educate patients or their caregivers about health and how to use and store their medicines in a correct manner.
- 1.6** Refer patients to relevant healthcare providers when necessary.
- 1.7** Keep records of professional services provided to patients.

Principle 2 - Use Professional Judgement in the Interests of Patients and the Public

A pharmacist is expected to use his professional judgement to deliver safe and effective care. Professional judgement may include balancing the needs of patients and public and at the same time, managing legal and professional responsibilities in order to decide the best option for the patient.

Pharmacists must:

- 2.1** Consider and act in the best interests of patients and the public in accordance with the current and accepted evidence based practices.
- 2.2** Ensure that professional judgement is not influenced by personal or organisational interests, financial interests, incentives, targets or similar measures.
- 2.3** Make responsible and effective use of resources in their practice.
- 2.4** Consult and take advice from colleagues and other healthcare professionals when necessary.
- 2.5** Be prepared to challenge the judgement of colleagues if needed in the interest of the patients.
- 2.6** In an emergency, consider all available options and weigh the benefits and risks to the provision of best care of patients and the public.

Principle 3 – Show Respect for Others

Showing respect for other people is essential in forming and maintaining professional relationships.

Pharmacists must:

- 3.1** Treat people politely, be compassionate and considerate.
- 3.2** Treat people fairly and ensure their views about belief, race, gender, age, disability, financial status, marital status or any other factors, do not affect how they provide their professional services.
- 3.3** Accept diversity and respect cultural differences and the right to hold personal values, opinions and beliefs when performing their professional services.
- 3.4** Ensure if their religious or moral beliefs prevent them from providing a service, explain and may refer patients to other providers.
- 3.5** Respect and protect people's dignity, privacy and confidentiality. Take all reasonable actions to prevent accidental disclosure or unauthorised access to confidential information. Never disclose confidential information without consent unless required by the law.
- 3.6** Ensure to provide the appropriate levels of privacy for patient consultations.
- 3.7** Maintain proper professional boundaries in their relationships with patients and others during the course of their professional practice and take special care when dealing with vulnerable person. A vulnerable person is someone who has a physical, intellectual or mental disability and is incapable of independent living.
- 3.8** Obtain consent for the professional services provided.
- 3.9** Obtain consent for the use of information in the course of their professional practice and use only for the purposes they were given it, or where the law permits.
- 3.10** Ensure the use of social media, manual and electronic pharmacy information system is consistent with the practitioner's ethical and legal obligations to protect privacy.
- 3.11** Support environment issues on the safe disposal of drugs and related products.

Principle 4 - Encourage Patients and the Public to Participate in Decisions About Their Care

Patients and the public are encouraged to be involved in decisions about their treatment and care. This needs effective communication.

Pharmacists must:

- 4.1** Work together in partnership with patients and the public, their caregivers and other healthcare providers to manage their treatment and care. Listen to patients and the public and respect their choices where applicable.
- 4.2** Ensure that information is appropriately shared with other health and social care providers involved in the care of the patient.
- 4.3** Communicate effectively with patients and the public and take reasonable measures to meet their communication needs.
- 4.4** Provide information on the medicine including the risks and benefits, to help patients improve their compliance.
- 4.5** Explain the options available to patients and the public, including risks and benefits, to help them make informed decisions. Make sure the information given is impartial, relevant, accurate and up to date.
- 4.6** Consider and take reasonable actions, to address those factors that may be preventing or deterring patients from getting or taking their treatment.
- 4.7** Ensure that any service provided to person who cannot legally make decisions about their care is in line with the appropriate requirements.

Principle 5 - Develop Your Professional Knowledge and Competence

Accurate, current and relevant professional knowledge and skills are essential for safe and effective practice. Development of knowledge, skills and professional behaviour must continue throughout a pharmacist's working life which involves keeping knowledge and skills up to date.

Pharmacists must:

- 5.1** Apply knowledge and skills appropriately to their practice.
- 5.2** Recognise the limitations of knowledge, skills and practise only in the areas which they are competent.
- 5.3** Keep their knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to maintain and improve the quality of practice.
- 5.4** Regularly monitor and reflect on their knowledge, skills and practice to undertake further education and training if necessary.
- 5.5** Keep and maintain up-to-date record of their continuing professional development.

Principle 6 - Be Ethical, Honest and Trustworthy

Pharmacists must behave in a way that justifies patients and public trust and maintain the reputation of their profession.

Pharmacists must:

- 6.1** Act with honesty, integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position to secure and maintain public trust and confidence in their profession.
- 6.2** Not exploit the vulnerability or lack of knowledge of others when providing or recommending services.
- 6.3** Recognise and endeavour to avoid conflicts of interest and declare any personal or professional interests they have.
- 6.4** Ensure accurate and impartial information for publication, teaching or providing services.
- 6.5** Respond openly, honestly and courteously to complaints and criticism.
- 6.6** Not discredit other healthcare professionals during their professional service.
- 6.7** Uphold the sanctity of human life in any pharmaceutical research carried out on human beings.

Principle 7 - Be Responsible of Your Working Practices

Pharmacists shall maintain the highest professional standard in the discharge of his professional service to his patients, clients and members of the allied professions.

Pharmacists must:

- 7.1** Practise only if they are fit to do so.
- 7.2** Actively participate and contribute to the development, education and training of colleagues and students, and share their skills, knowledge and expertise.
- 7.3** Take responsibility for all their professional activities, and for all activities undertaken under their direct supervision.
- 7.4** Obey the laws, regulations, standards and policies of the profession.
- 7.5** Assure that all standard operating procedures are up to date and are being followed.
- 7.6** Consider getting professional indemnity to cover all their work, or work that they are responsible for.
- 7.7** Ensure only medicines and health related products that are safe, effective and of good quality being supplied.
- 7.8** Make sure that there is an effective complaints procedure and issues are being addressed properly.
- 7.9** Display a standard of behaviour that warrants the trust and respect of the community.
- 7.10** Not advertise, directly or indirectly, for promoting their professional advantage, professional skills, knowledge or services other than permitted by legislation.
- 7.11** Demonstrate leadership, teamwork and compassion in workplace.

Acknowledgements

Advisor

Dr. Salmah binti Bahri (RPh. 783)
Senior Director of Pharmaceutical Services Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Editorial Committee

Salwati binti Abd Kadir (RPh. 1875)
Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Dali bin Ismail (RPh. 1144)
Kedah State Health Department

Prof. Dr. Salmiah binti Mohd Ali (RPh. 641)
Asia Metropolitan University

Amrahi bin Buang (RPh. 581)
Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society

Wong Sie Sing (RPh. 700)
Sarawak Pharmaceutical Society

Contributors

Mohd Yunos bin Shaari (RPh. 1079)
Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Siti Hufaidah binti Suhimi (RPh. 3110)
Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Mohammad Hafiz bin Othman (RPh. 4334)
Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Salina binti Rasli
Pharmacy Board Malaysia
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Norhaliza binti Abdul Halim (RPh. 1750)
Pharmacy Policy and Strategic Planning Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Dr. Azuana binti Ramli (RPh. 1889)
Pharmacy Policy and Strategic Planning Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Asniza binti Alias (RPh. 2447)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Siti Mariaton binti Mokhsin (RPh. 2740)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Hasrolnizam bin Abdullah (RPh. 2983)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Salina binti Mohd Zamani (RPh. 2969)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Mohd Azaruddin bin Azis (RPh. 3511)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Mohammad Faizal bin Ahmat Zainuri (RPh. 4754)
Pharmacy Enforcement Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Mohd Dziejhan bin Mustapa (RPh. 4284)
Pharmacy Practice and Development Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Leona Tan Sze Ping (RPh. 5300)
Pharmacy Policy and Strategic Planning Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Abu Bakar bin Ibrahim
Pharmacy Policy and Strategic Planning Division
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Ahmad Syamsury bin Sulaiman (RPh. 3235)
Pharmaniaga Lifescience Sdn. Bhd.

Mohd Nasrul bin Mohamad Noor (RPh. 3892)
National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Indra Shahril bin Abdul Hamid
National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Dr. Nour Hanah binti Othman (RPh. 772)
Hospital Kuala Lumpur

Fuziah binti Abdul Rashid (RPh. 1359)
Negeri Sembilan State Health Department

Zubaidah binti Che' Embee (RPh. 1071)
Penang State Health Department

Ainul Salhani binti Abdul Rahman (RPh. 2132)
Hospital Shah Alam

Mohd Zawawi bin Abdullah (RPh. 2183)
Terengganu Pharmacy Enforcement Branch

Noraniza binti Ahmad (RPh. 2045)
Penang Pharmacy Enforcement Branch

Masliza binti Arip (RPh. 3607)
Johor Pharmacy Enforcement Branch

Shamsudin bin Yuddin (RPh. 3225)
Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur Pharmacy
Enforcement Branch

Zaidi bin Ahmad (RPh. 2515)
Perak Pharmacy Enforcement Branch

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Hadijah binti Shamsudin
(RPh. 2000)
International Islamic University Malaysia

Andrew Tan Eng Joo (RPh. 2083)
Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society

John Chang Chiew Pheng (RPh. 221)
Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society

Jeff Kong Jiang Foong (RPh. 3126)
Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society

Wong Siew Piin (RPh. 6045)
Malaysian Community Pharmacy Guild

Fong Mei Ling (RPh. 8028)
Malaysian Community Pharmacy Guild

Wong Ling Feng (RPh. 5454)
Sarawak Pharmaceutical Society

Note

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