

# Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct

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Updated: October 2017

## For members of PodiatryNZ

The members of PodiatryNZ are committed to the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct at all times.

All members are expected to abide by this Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct as well as complying with all applicable laws, regulations and rules.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this Code, the following definitions apply:

Client/patient	Includes current clients/patients, potential clients/patients and past clients/patients of a member.
Code	Means this Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct adopted by the Board of PodiatryNZ in accordance with the Rules of PodiatryNZ.
Complainant	Means a person expressing concern about a member or making a complaint.
Complaints Policy and Procedure	Means the Complaints Policy and Procedure adopted by the Board of PodiatryNZ in accordance with the Rules of PodiatryNZ.
PodiatryNZ	Podiatry New Zealand (Incorporated) – Te Roopu Tiaki Waewae O Aotearoa.
Member	Means a member of PodiatryNZ and includes the employees, agents, contractors and sub-contractors of a member.

## Values and Principles

All members shall act in accordance with the following values and principles:

1. Integrity
  - a. Members will act with integrity. They shall not gain unfair advantage from the lack of knowledge, inexperience or inability of a client/patient.
  - b. Members will treat all persons fairly, respectfully and with dignity.
  - c. Members will always conduct their business in a manner that reflects favourably on the profession.
  - d. Members who are practising podiatrists will adhere to the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights.
  - e. Members will not make any oral or written statements to the media unfairly criticising PodiatryNZ without first seeking resolution with the PodiatryNZ Chair or Secretariat.
2. Confidentiality
  - a. Members shall be committed to protecting the confidences and privacy of past, current and prospective client/patients and employees in all their dealings.

### 3. Ethics

- a. Members must always conduct their business to the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and decency.
- b. Staff induction programmes are to include ethical considerations.
- c. Members shall not take advantage of a privileged position to compete unfairly or fail to give credit for the work of others to whom credit is due.
- d. Members must not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information.
- e. Members should exercise careful judgement before accepting any gift, hospitality or gratuity, which could be interpreted as an inducement to use or endorse any product, equipment or policy. Members must not allow gifts to influence their clinical judgement.
- f. Members will recognise that client/patients have a choice and will treat the client/patient's decision with respect. client/patients should fill in their own application forms for funded treatments – unless the client/patient has a medical impairment and requests assistance.
- g. Members should always exercise judgment that the chosen methods of diagnosis and treatment are appropriate especially when giving a remote consultation. It is essential that the member and the client/patient are able to reliably identify each other. Remote interactions should be documented in the client/patient's clinical record.
- h. Members shall behave cooperatively and respectfully towards PodiatryNZ members and colleagues.
- i. Members will treat all client/patients fairly and equitably, respecting cultural and moral values and the dignity of the individual.

### 4. Duty of Care

- a. Welfare, health and safety - The welfare, health and safety of the client/patient shall at all times take precedence over professional or private interests.
- b. Competence - members shall only operate in their areas of competence, inform client/patients in any instances where they do not hold appropriate qualifications or experience to carry out work and only give advice and opinions on the basis of adequate knowledge.
- c. Unsafe or unethical practices - members have a general responsibility to ensure unsafe or unethical practices are reported to relevant authorities (Registration Board) without delay. Members have a responsibility to assist colleagues who are unwell or under stress in order to avoid harm to patients.
- d. Informed consent - members shall involve client/patients as far as possible in understanding the nature of their problems. Client/patients need to be informed of the full range of options, including the benefits, risks, and costs of each. Client/patients are to be provided with the information needed to make an informed decision.
- e. Entitlements - When requested, or if a need is apparent, members shall provide client/patients with any requisite information, which they hold, to enable them to receive benefits to which they may be entitled.
- f. Support person - members will advise all client/patients of their right to have a third-party present during any contact.

5. Quality
  - a. Members shall be committed to delivering high quality, timely, efficient, reliable and valued services.
  - b. Members shall ensure all information is recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
  - c. Members shall seek to improve the standards of medical care through continuing self-education and thoughtful interaction with appropriate colleagues.
  - d. Members have a responsibility to participate in reviewing their own practice and that of others, and to develop a critical attitude towards accepted and traditional practice.
  - e. Advances and innovative approaches to clinical practice should be subject to review and promulgation through professional channels. Members should provide carefully considered and generally accepted scientific knowledge. If presenting an opinion contrary to that generally held within the profession, members must indicate that this is the case and present the information fairly.
6. Environmental Care
  - a. Members shall act responsibly towards the environment at all times, ensuring compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and encouraging environmentally responsible work practices.
7. Cooperation
  - a. Members shall always demonstrate the highest standards of professional courtesy.
  - b. If a client/patient requests a change to a different provider, members must (with the client/patient's permission) communicate to ensure the change is completed with minimal disruption to the client/patient's service and without disadvantaging the client/patient in any way.
  - c. Members shall not publicly injure the professional reputation of other members or colleagues.
8. Conflict of Interest
  - a. Members shall strive to avoid all known conflicts of interest and to keep client/patients or other relevant third parties fully informed in any such matter. members shall not allow any preferred relationship with another member to interfere with the interest of client/patients.
9. Compliance
  - a. Members shall abide by this code and all relevant New Zealand laws and regulations.
10. Complaints
  - a. If a member is concerned about the service delivery or conduct of another member, they must seek to resolve the issues with that member before making a complaint.
  - b. If the matter cannot be resolved and the member (Complainant) refers the matter to PodiatryNZ, PodiatryNZ may investigate that matter in accordance with the Complaints Policy and Procedure, or it may recommend that the complaint be directed to a more appropriate authority.
  - c. All members are required to cooperate with PodiatryNZ in relation to any investigation.