



College of
TRADITIONAL
CHINESE MEDICINE
PRACTITIONERS +
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Practice Standard on Ethical Practice and Professional Accountability

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Practice Standards of the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners & Acupuncturists of British Columbia (the “College”) set out minimum requirements for the professional conduct of TCM professionals practising in British Columbia. Together with the *Jurisprudence Handbook* and relevant legislation and case law, they will be used by the College and its Committees when considering a practitioner’s practice or conduct.

Within the Practice Standard, the term ‘must’ is used to indicate a College requirement and the term ‘advised’ is used to indicate that the practitioner can use reasonable discretion when applying this expectation to practice.

Preamble

This Practice Standard is founded on the fundamental principles and values of medical ethics: compassion, beneficence, non-maleficence, respect for persons, justice, and accountability.

It is the responsibility of each registrant to be familiar with and strictly comply with the Bylaws, including **Schedule A Code of Ethics**¹ and **Schedule B Standards of Practice**². Registrants are also expected to be familiar and abide by the CTCMA Jurisprudence Handbook and to comply with the BC Human Rights Code³. This practice standard needs to be read in conjunction with these other documents and all statutory requirements, such as the Health Professions Act.

Ethical Practice and Professional Accountability recognizes that the full scope of TCM practice accountabilities includes all professional interactions during the provision of direct patient care, and professional and administrative activities which support direct patient care.

¹ The Code of Ethics deals with the ethical obligations of practitioners. These ethical principles include being honest at all times, respecting the confidentiality of a patient, treating clients with sensitivity, maintaining one’s competence and allowing patients to make informed choices as to their health care.

² Practice standards deal with ways in which to practise safely, effectively and professionally.

³ [BC Human Rights Code](#) ensures protection for individuals who are actual or perceived members of certain protected groups. Such groups are classified by characteristics or protected grounds and include race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, and age.

Standards

General Principles

1. The registrant must act in the best interest of the patient and provide safe, professional, quality patient care.

In doing so, the registrant must strive to create and foster an environment in which the rights, autonomy, dignity and diversity of all patients, or those seeking to become patients, are respected.

Ethics

2. The registrant must:
 - a. make the patient the primary concern in providing care;
 - b. provide care in a manner that preserves and protects patient dignity;
 - c. demonstrate honesty and integrity;
 - d. clearly and accurately represent self with respect to name, title and role;
 - e. protect patient privacy and confidentiality;
 - f. recognize and respect the patient's right to be informed and make informed choices;
 - g. maintain respectful communication in all professional interactions;
 - h. treat colleagues, students and other health care workers in a respectful manner and address concerns related to disrespectful behaviour in the workplace;
 - i. recognize and respect the contribution of others on the health care team and work collaboratively with them;
 - j. understand the consequences of one's own values, beliefs and experiences and ensure that one's decisions and actions are made with patient consent and that they benefit patient care;
 - k. recognize potential conflicts of interest and take action to prevent or resolve potential or actual conflicts of interest;
 - l. identify ethical issues and take action to resolve them, consulting an appropriate body or persons where appropriate; and
 - m. initiate, maintain and terminate practitioner-patient relationships in an appropriate manner.

Accountability

3. The registrant must:
 - a. adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and standards governing the practice of the profession;
 - b. function within the limits of their own level of competence, and within the legally recognized scope of practice, and in compliance with all relevant legislation;
 - c. assess their own practice and undertake activities to improve and enhance that practice and meet identified learning goals on an ongoing basis;
 - d. take action to promote the provision of safe, appropriate and ethical care to patients;
 - e. report any sexual misconduct perpetrated by any regulated health professional;
 - f. maintain current and proper registration while engaged in practice;
 - g. maintain their own physical, psychological and emotional fitness to practice;
 - h. report situations in which there is a good reason to believe that any regulated health professional is impaired or incompetent to practice and who may pose a significant risk or danger to the public according to the Health Professions Act; and
 - i. understand the role of the regulatory body and the relationship of the regulatory body to one's own practice which is to protect the public.

4. The registrant must take responsibility for their own:
 - a. clinical practice and the patient care that they provide, including the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, advice given and referral of the patient;
 - b. professional conduct; and
 - c. competence and fitness to practice.

5. The registrant must establish and maintain a clinical premise/ work environments that is safe, accessible, and conducive to an ethical practice⁴. The registrant must be responsible for:
 - a. business functions including and not limited to billing, advertising, and promotion;
 - b. quality assurance and quality improvements;
 - c. clinical record documentation and management; and
 - d. infection control and prevention.

6. Treatment related tasks not requiring any clinical judgement may be delegated (e.g. staff and unregulated care providers) by the registrant. The registrant must be responsible for:
 - a. ensuring that any delegee has sufficient training, qualifications, and experience to safely and correctly provide those delegated tasks and that they follow relevant legislations⁵;
 - b. ensuring that clear and appropriate tasks and responsibilities are set for the delegee and that their performance is supervised by the registrant⁶; and
 - c. providing appropriate, timely support for any staff and unregulated care providers under their supervision.

Related Documents

College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners & Acupuncturists of British Columbia

- [TCM Bylaws – CTCMA](#) (Schedule A Code of Ethics and Schedule B Standards of Practice)
- [Jurisprudence Handbook](#)

Relevant Legislation

- [Health Professions Act](#)
- [Human Rights Code - BC Laws](#)

⁴ Section 6 of the Schedule A Code of Ethics addresses "Practice environments conducive to safe, competent, ethical care."

⁵ Relevant legislation examples: For private practices, maintaining confidential information under the [Personal Information Protection Act](#) (PIPA). For public bodies, maintaining confidential information under the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPPA\)](#).

⁶ According to section 6 of the Code of Ethics, "registrants have full responsibility for all the care they provide or delegate to persons under their supervision."