



# WMA International Code of Medical Ethics

***Adopted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the World Medical Association, London, England, October 1949***

***and amended by the 22<sup>nd</sup> World Medical Assembly, Sydney, Australia, August 1968***

***and the 35<sup>th</sup> World Medical Assembly, Venice, Italy, October 1983***

***and the 57<sup>th</sup> WMA General Assembly, Pilanesberg, South Africa, October 2006***

## DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS IN GENERAL

A PHYSICIAN SHALL	always exercise his/her independent professional judgment and maintain the highest standards of professional conduct.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	respect a competent patient's right to accept or refuse treatment.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	not allow his/her judgment to be influenced by personal profit or unfair discrimination.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	be dedicated to providing competent medical service in full professional and moral independence, with compassion and respect for human dignity.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	deal honestly with patients and colleagues, and report to the appropriate authorities those physicians who practice unethically or incompetently or who engage in fraud or deception.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	not receive any financial benefits or other incentives solely for referring patients or prescribing specific products.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	respect the rights and preferences of patients, colleagues, and other health professionals.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	recognize his/her important role in educating the public but should use due caution in divulging discoveries or new techniques or treatment through non-professional channels.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	certify only that which he/she has personally verified.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	strive to use health care resources in the best way to benefit patients and their community.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	seek appropriate care and attention if he/she suffers from mental or physical illness.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	respect the local and national codes of ethics.

## DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS TO PATIENTS

A PHYSICIAN	always bear in mind the obligation to respect human life.
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A PHYSICIAN SHALL	act in the patient's best interest when providing medical care.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	owe his/her patients complete loyalty and all the scientific resources available to him/her. Whenever an examination or treatment is beyond the physician's capacity, he/she should consult with or refer to another physician who has the necessary ability.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	respect a patient's right to confidentiality. It is ethical to disclose confidential information when the patient consents to it or when there is a real and imminent threat of harm to the patient or to others and this threat can be only removed by a breach of confidentiality.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	give emergency care as a humanitarian duty unless he/she is assured that others are willing and able to give such care.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	in situations when he/she is acting for a third party, ensure that the patient has full knowledge of that situation.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	not enter into a sexual relationship with his/her current patient or into any other abusive or exploitative relationship.

## DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS TO COLLEAGUES

A PHYSICIAN SHALL	behave towards colleagues as he/she would have them behave towards him/her.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	NOT undermine the patient-physician relationship of colleagues in order to attract patients.
A PHYSICIAN SHALL	when medically necessary, communicate with colleagues who are involved in the care of the same patient. This communication should respect patient confidentiality and be confined to necessary information.

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