

**21 NCAC 17 .0114 CODE OF ETHICS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT**

(a) Licensees, under the Act, shall comply with the following Code of Ethics in their professional practice and conduct. The Code reflects the ethical principles of the dietetic/nutrition professional and outlines obligations of the licensee to self, client or patient, society, and the profession and sets forth mandatory standards of conduct for all licensees.

- (1) The licensee shall provide professional services with objectivity and with respect for the unique needs and values of individuals as determined through the nutritional assessment.
- (2) The licensee shall conduct all practices of dietetics or nutrition with honesty.
- (3) The licensee shall present substantiated information and assess the validity and applicability of scientific evidence without personal bias.
- (4) The licensee shall practice evidence-based dietetics or nutrition.
- (5) The licensee shall assume responsibility and accountability for personal competence in practice, continuously develop and enhance expertise through education, and recognize personal limitations.
- (6) The licensee shall inform the public of his or her services by using accurate and truthful information.
- (7) The licensee shall not exercise undue influence on a client or patient. This includes, not exercising excessive persuasion or improper influence on a client or patient in the promotion or the sale of services or products. The licensee shall be alert to any conflicts of interest and shall provide full disclosure when a real or potential conflict of interest arises.
- (8) The licensee shall not reveal information about a client or patient obtained in a professional capacity, without prior consent of the client or patient, except as authorized or required by law, and shall make full disclosure about any limitations on his or her ability to guarantee this.
- (9) The licensee shall safeguard client or patient confidentiality according to current regulations and laws, using appropriate technology, such as encryption.
- (10) The licensee shall recognize and exercise professional judgment within the limits of the licensee's qualifications and shall not accept or perform professional responsibilities which the licensee knows or has reason to know that he or she is not qualified to perform.
- (11) The licensee shall collaborate with others involved in the patient's care, obtain consultation from health care providers when appropriate, and make referrals to health care providers when the licensee cannot provide the client or patient the services he or she needs.
- (12) The licensee shall take action, with prior consent of the client or patient, to inform a client or patient's physician or other health care practitioner in writing in cases where a client or patient's nutritional status indicates a change in health status impacting the disease or medical condition for which the physician or other health care practitioner is treating the client or patient.
- (13) The licensee shall ensure that his or her client or patient has sufficient information to understand the nutrition diagnosis and the implications of nutrition intervention. The licensee shall not guarantee that nutrition care services will cause any certain outcome or particular result for the client or patient.
- (14) The licensee shall permit use of that licensee's name for the purpose of certifying that dietetics or nutrition services have been rendered only if the licensee has provided or supervised those services.
- (15) The licensee shall document, code, and bill nutrition services to most accurately reflect the character and extent of such delivered services.
- (16) The licensee shall notify the Board in writing within 30 days of the occurrence of any of the following:
  - (A) the licensee seeks any medical care or professional treatment for the chronic or persistent use of intoxicants, drugs, or narcotics.
  - (B) the licensee is adjudicated to be mentally incompetent.
  - (C) the licensee has been convicted or entered into a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to any crime directly related to the duties and responsibilities of a dietitian or nutritionist or that was violent or sexual in nature; or
  - (D) the licensee has been disciplined by an agency of another state that regulates the practice of dietetics or nutrition.
- (17) The licensee shall comply with all laws and rules concerning the profession.

- (18) The licensee shall uphold the Code of Ethics for professional practice and conduct by reporting to the Board inappropriate behavior or treatment of a client or patient by the licensee or others in violation of the Code and the Act.
  - (19) The licensee shall not interfere with an investigation or disciplinary proceeding by willful misrepresentation of facts to the Board or its representative or by the use of threats or harassment against any person.
  - (20) The licensee shall not engage in kissing, fondling, touching, or in any activities, advances, or comments of a sexual nature with any client, patient, or, while under the licensee's supervision, any supervisee, student, or trainee.
  - (21) The licensee shall not invite, accept, or offer gifts, monetary incentives, or other considerations that affect or reasonably give an appearance of affecting the licensee's professional judgment.
- (b) Conduct and circumstances which may result in disciplinary action by the Board include the following:
- (1) The licensee is a chronic user of intoxicants, drugs, or narcotics to the extent that the same impairs his or her ability to practice dietetics or nutrition, as determined by a health care provider licensed to conduct such assessment.
  - (2) The licensee is mentally, emotionally, or physically unfit to practice dietetics or nutrition and is afflicted with such a mental, emotional, or physical disability as to be dangerous to the health and welfare of a client or patient, as determined by a health care provider licensed to conduct such assessment.
  - (3) The licensee has been disciplined by an agency of another state that regulates the practice of dietetics or nutrition and at least one of the grounds for the discipline is the same or substantially equivalent to the grounds for discipline in this state.
  - (4) The licensee has violated any provisions of the Act or any of the rules of this Chapter.

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 90-356(3); 90-356(2);  
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