

AHMA Practitioner Ethical Guidelines

The American Holistic Medical Association (hereinafter “AHMA”) encourages high standards of professionalism and proficiency of its members. AHMA members have diverse training and credentials, and the services they perform are multi-faceted and often complex. While state medical boards have licensure for physicians and many healthcare providers, some states do not have specific educational and training standards in the healing arts. Therefore, the AHMA encourages all practitioners to seek out training and credentials from individuals and schools that are recognized and respected in their field of specialty. In addition, all AHMA members are encouraged to expand their knowledge of various healing modalities. To that extent we suggest that continuing medical/education units in support of holistic health practices be acquired no less than bi-annually.

To promote high ethical standards and provide guidance and clarity, the AHMA encourages all its doctor and practitioner members to embrace the principles and values outlined below.

Principles of Conduct

1. A member shall *maintain and advance the knowledge of holistic practice* and *shall contribute to the growth and development of the healing arts*. This includes:
 - Putting holistic mission above personal gain.
 - Demonstrating a consistent pattern of reasonable care and competence within the area of practice.
 - Adhering to the spirit, as well as the letter of the law in the conduct of professional activities.
 - Striving to improve professional knowledge and skill, including participation in educational programs and personal development, so that their performance will better serve others.
 - Upholding human rights in all endeavors.
2. A member shall *serve his/her clients compassionately, competently, in a professional and unprejudiced manner, with dignity and respect*. This includes:
 - Providing services to the best of his/her ability and with informed consent throughout.
 - Helping the client understand the scope of services, approach to be used, and fee structures.
 - Declining to make commitments that cannot likely be fulfilled or to provide services for which one does not have the appropriate knowledge, training, and experience.
3. A member shall *refrain from sexual intimacy* with his/her clients and shall *remain independent of any affiliations that could compromise his/her judgment* or result in the appearance of compromise or impropriety. A member’s duty is solely to the client.
4. A member shall *maintain a high level of truth and candor*. This includes:
 - Not intentionally or recklessly misleading existing or prospective clients about results that can be anticipated .
 - Refraining from offering solutions or making recommendations that are unrealistic or impractical.
 - Openly sharing information concerning the fee for services and expected timelines.
5. A member will *hold as confidential all client information*, refraining from releasing any information to anyone without authorization from the client, except as provided for by law. Clients will be allowed reasonable access to a member’s written record about the client.
6. A member shall *observe and practice appropriate ethical monetary policy*:
 - Limiting the source of clinical income to medical services actually rendered by the practitioner.
 - Monetary fee should be commensurate with the services rendered.
 - The practitioner should neither pay nor receive a commission for referral of patients.
 - Drugs, remedies or appliances may be dispensed or supplied by the practitioner provided it is clearly in the best interests of the patient. The patient must be given additional resources, data or information for the items if requested.
7. A member shall *uphold the integrity and dignity of the holistic profession*. This includes:
 - Refraining from referring a client to a colleague in exchange for monetary consideration from that colleague or in any way sharing in any fee received by such colleague.
 - Being forthcoming and truthful about his/her credentials, licensures, accreditation and/or capabilities; recognizing boundaries of competence; working cooperatively with other practitioners in the best interest of the client.
 - Not giving the impression that *AHMA* membership bestows any credentials or guarantees minimum qualifications.
 - Subscribing, and representing that he/she subscribes, to this Code of Ethics.

To maintain the integrity of the AHMA we request that all members support the “Ten Principles of Holistic Medicine”.

1. **Optimal health** is the primary goal of holistic medical practice. It is the conscious pursuit of the highest level of functioning and balance of the physical, environmental, mental, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of human experience, resulting in a dynamic state of being fully alive. This creates a condition of well-being regardless of the presence or absence of disease.
2. **The Healing Power of Love.** Holistic healthcare practitioners strive to meet the patient with grace, kindness, acceptance, and spirit without condition, as love is life’s most powerful healer.
3. **Whole person.** Holistic healthcare practitioners view people as the unity of body, mind, spirit and the systems in which they live.
4. **Prevention and Treatment.** Holistic healthcare practitioners promote health, prevent illness and help raise awareness of dis-ease in our lives rather than merely managing symptoms. A holistic approach relieves symptoms, modifies contributing factors, and enhances the patient’s life system to optimize future well-being.
5. **Innate Healing Power.** All people have innate powers of healing in their bodies, minds and spirits. Holistic healthcare practitioners evoke and help patients utilize these powers to affect the healing process.
6. **Integration of Healing Systems.** Holistic healthcare practitioners embrace a lifetime of learning about all safe and effective options in diagnosis and treatment. These options come from a variety of traditions, and are selected in order to best meet the unique needs of the patient. The realm of choices may include lifestyle modification and complementary approaches as well as conventional drugs and surgery.
7. **Relationship-centered care.** The ideal practitioner-patient relationship is a partnership that encourages patient autonomy, and values the needs and insights of both parties. The quality of this relationship is an essential contributor to the healing process.
8. **Individuality.** Holistic healthcare practitioners focus patient care on the unique needs and nature of the person who has an illness rather than the illness that has the person.
9. **Teaching by Example.** Holistic healthcare practitioners continually work toward the personal incorporation of the principles of holistic health, which then profoundly influence the quality of the healing relationship.
10. **Learning opportunities.** All life experiences--including birth, joy, suffering and the dying process--are profound learning opportunities for both patients and healthcare practitioners.

Client’s Rights

If a client so desires, AHMA members will encourage the client to seek information, education and potential treatment from other modalities and practitioners. If a client terminates an AHMA practitioner’s services, the client has a right to coordinated transfer of services to another practitioner. A client has a right to refuse services at any time, recognizing that there may be legal ramifications to the patient for their decision. A client has a right to be free of physical, verbal or sexual abuse. A client has a right to know the expected duration of treatment and may assert any right without retaliation.

Unless licensed to do so, AHMA members will not provide a medical diagnosis or recommend discontinuance of medically prescribed treatments. Unless licensed to do so, AHMA practitioners will not represent their services as any form of healthcare or psychotherapy and by law, may make no health benefit claims to clients. Services may be motivational, coaching, educational, or inspirational in nature, and a client may be guided to utilize his/her own innate spiritual resources in order to attain positive benefits.

If clients have a complaint about AHMA members’ services or behavior that the member cannot resolve personally, the client may contact AHMA to seek redress.

NOTE: The AHMA will not be held legally responsible for the practice and treatment choices of member practitioners.

I acknowledge and accept these ethical guidelines and voice support for the “10 Principles” as a prerequisite to my acceptance of membership.