



## The College of Pedorthics of Canada

### Code of Ethics

The following **Code of Ethics** has been published and distributed by The College of Pedorthics of Canada (the “CPC”) to guide and assist the members in meeting and maintaining proper standards of professional conduct. It includes, Appendix ‘A’ which outlines various examples of Misconduct and Appendix ‘B’ which outlines definitions of terms used. The Code of Ethics shall be construed as a general guide and not a denial of the existence of other duties equally imperative and other rights not specifically mentioned.

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#### General Responsibilities

(1) The pedorthic practitioner has an obligation to abide by all applicable municipal, provincial and federal health and safety codes, legal requirements and societal conventions.

(2) The pedorthic practitioner is obliged to ensure a safe, accessible, and comfortable environment for his clients and employees, free of harassment.

(3) The member shall ensure that documentation in client records is clear and accurate, satisfying acceptable client care, peer review and legal requirements.

(4) It is unethical for the member to conceal or to confuse the ultimate cost of the service that he undertakes to furnish. Charges must be based strictly upon the product and/or services provided. The invoice must not misrepresent the products or services provided. All records (invoices, receipts, statements etc) must contain accurate information with respect to names, dates, products and so on.

(5) A member shall be responsible for the prompt identification and proposed resolution of conflicts of interest. If a real or potential conflict of interest arises, the member will take all reasonable steps to resolve conflict of interest by informing all parties of the need to resolve the situation.

(6) A member shall not exploit any relationship established as a practitioner to further their own physical, emotional, financial, political, or business interests at the expense of the best interest of clients. This includes, but is not limited to: soliciting clients of the member's employer for private practice; using coercion or taking advantage of trust or dependency to engage in sexual activities or to initiate/continue treatment of a client where it is ineffective, unnecessary or no longer indicated; breaching an agreement with a client or employer regarding the use of resources for provision of services; securing or

accepting significant financial or material benefit for activities which are already awarded by salary or other compensation; and, prejudicing others against a colleague for reasons of personal gain.

(7) Advertising refers to any promotional material in any medium including websites. Confine advertising of professional services to the presentation of information reasonably needed by clients or colleagues to make an informed decision about the availability and appropriateness of your pedorthic services. Advertising of retail operations, sales, promotions or other marketing campaigns should be kept completely separate from advertising of professional services. Professional Service advertising should:

- Make sure that any announcement or advertisement directed towards clients or colleagues is demonstrably true in all respects.
- Advertising should not stimulate a demand for unnecessary health care services; Members must not advertise in a way that promotes the excessive or unnecessary use of pedorthic services
- Advertising should not bring the profession into disrepute.
- Not make comparisons with another member or other foot care professional to suggest superiority
- Refrain from making fraudulent or misleading statements concerning his or her, or the professions skills, knowledge or capabilities.
- Not provide any guarantee of the success of the service provided
- Not advertise coupons, discounts, or free assessments or products for professional services and/or custom made and/or modified devices.

## Responsibilities to the Client

(1) Provide the client with medically necessary services in a conscientious manner and with the client's best interests in mind. Do not exploit clients for personal advantage.

(2) The member can provide assessment services without a medical prescription, but the provision of a medically required custom made device requires a prescription from a qualified prescriber.

(3) Take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to clients; should harm occur, disclose it to the client.

(4) Be responsible for all treatment and services rendered by the member, or by other non certified personnel including C Ped Tech (C)s and students, who are under the direct supervision of the member;

(5) Advise the patient in advance to the provision of services and/or any relevant billings:

- The total cost of the service
- That a service may be uninsured
- The specific terms and conditions relevant to payment
- Any penalties for non-attendance or non-payment
- If payment will be required in advance of a requested service

- That a prescription may be required for third party reimbursement

(4) Maintain *confidentiality* of all information. It is unethical for the pedorthist to release any information about a client, his condition, or his treatment, other than in consultation with the referring professional or the paying agent (such as the insurer) Consultation shall include routine follow-up letters to the referring and attending professionals.

(5) Information from client records may be released for the purposes of research or other public interest use, provided that anything that would identify the client specifically is removed. Information from patient files should be released to the patient when requested in writing, or to a third party when appropriate patient consent has been received.

(6) Provide your clients with the information and advice they need to make informed decisions about their pedorthic care, and answer their questions to the best of your ability. Make every reasonable effort to communicate with your patients in such a way that the information exchanged is understood.

(7) Respect the right of a competent client to accept or reject any pedorthic care recommended.

(8) Make every effort to fill a client's prescription within a reasonable period of time. In such cases where this cannot be fulfilled, the pedorthic practitioner has the obligation to inform the client.

(9) Recognize your limitations and the competence of others and when indicated, recommend that additional opinions and services be sought.

## Responsibilities to the Profession

1. Recognize that the self-regulation of the profession is a privilege and that each member has a continuing responsibility to merit this privilege.

2. Teach and be taught. The members shall endeavor to maintain and improve their professional knowledge and skill, and in this regard shall maintain required continuing education points and should provide educational opportunity to others.

3. Avoid impugning the reputation of colleagues for personal motives; however, report to the CPC any unethical conduct by colleagues.

4. Be willing to participate in peer review of other pedorthists and to undergo review by your peers.

5. Enter into Professional Affiliations with others only if you can maintain your own professional integrity.

6. The member shall possess the qualities of integrity and reliability and shall maintain a standard of professional competency.

## Responsibilities to the Public

1. The pedorthic practitioner may only use those professional designations that he has duly earned and maintained in accordance with the regulations of the appropriate certifying and governing bodies.

- It is unethical for the pedorthic practitioner to represent himself in any way that could mislead the public as to his qualifications
- The terms “pedorthic technician”, “pedorthist”, “certified pedorthist” and “pedorthic master craftsman”, are reserved only for those practitioners who are appropriately certified by the College. Any use of these terms or similar terms, in the absence of appropriate certification will be considered misrepresentation.

2. The pedorthist may not solicit clients or referring professionals with gratuitous offers.

3. Recognize a responsibility to give generally held opinions of the profession when interpreting scientific knowledge to the public; when presenting an opinion that is contrary to the generally held opinion of the profession, so indicate.

## Responsibilities to Oneself

1. Seek help from colleagues and appropriately qualified professionals for personal problems that might adversely affect your service to clients, society or the profession.

2. Protect and enhance your own health and well being by identifying those stress factors in your professional and personal lives that can be managed by developing and practicing appropriate coping strategies.

## APPENDIX 'A'

## Examples of Professional Misconduct

The following further clarifies and provides some examples of potential acts of misconduct.

### THE PRACTICE OF THE PROFESSION AND CARE OF, AND RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS

1. Contravening a term, condition or limitation on the member's certificate of registration.
2. Contravening a standard of practice of the profession or failing to maintain the standard of practice of the profession.
3. Doing anything to a client for a therapeutic, preventative, palliative, diagnostic, cosmetic or other health-related purpose in a situation in which a consent is required by law, without such a consent.
4. Abusing a client verbally, physically, psychologically, emotionally or sexually.
5. Practicing the profession while the member's ability to do so is impaired by any substance.
6. Discontinuing professional services that are needed unless,
  - i. the client requests the discontinuation,
  - ii. alternative services are arranged,
  - iii. the client is given a reasonable opportunity to arrange alternative services,
  - iv. services to the client have been discontinued without consultation with the member,
  - v. the client can no longer meet agreed upon terms of payment, and all reasonable attempts on the part of the member to facilitate such payment have been unsuccessful,
  - vi. the client has been given reasonable opportunity to achieve set client goals,
  - vii. the facility providing services has exhausted the resources allocated to those services, or
  - viii. the client or his or her family is abusive to the member or the member's staff. Alternate arrangements with another foot care provider should still be made to accommodate the client
7. Failing to reveal the exact nature of a treatment provided by the member following a client's request to do so.

## REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT MEMBERS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR LEVEL OF SERVICE

8. Inappropriately using a term, title or designation in respect of the member's practice.
9. Using a term, title or designation indicating or implying a specialization in the profession.
10. Practicing the profession using a name other than the member's name as entered in the register.
11. Claims or guarantees such as "we cure heel pain"

## RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTS

12. Failing to keep records in accordance with the standards of a health care profession.
13. Falsifying a record relating to the member's practice.
14. Failing, without reasonable cause, to provide a report or certificate relating to an assessment or intervention performed by the member, within a reasonable time, to the client or his or her authorized representative after a client or his or her authorized representative has requested such a report or certificate.
15. Signing or issuing, in the member's professional capacity a document that the member knows, or ought to have known, contains a false or misleading statement.

## BUSINESS PRACTICES

16. Submitting an account or charge for services that the member knows is false or misleading.
17. Failing to advise the client of the fee to be charged or any penalties for late payment prior to providing a service.
18. Charging a fee that is excessive in relation to the service provided.
19. Offering or giving a reduction for prompt payment of an account.
20. Failing to itemize an account for professional services,
  - i. if requested to do so by the client or the person or agency who is to pay, in whole or in part, for the services, or
  - ii. if the account includes items that are purchased on behalf of clients.

Please note that it is acceptable for the member to provide pro bono or reduced cost services on a discretionary basis for clients with an inability to pay.

21. Indicating that reimbursement for products and or services by a third party is guaranteed. It is acceptable to suggest the client investigate third party reimbursement but not to guarantee same.

#### MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

22. Engaging in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all the circumstances would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

23. Misappropriating property from a client or workplace.

24. Failing to inform the member's employer of the member's inability to accept responsibility in those areas where specific training is required or where the member does not feel competent to function without supervision.

25. Failing to comply with an order of a panel of the Ethics Committee, Complaints Investigation Committee or a panel of the Disciplinary Committee.

26. Failing to appear before a panel of the Complaints or Discipline Committee to be cautioned.

27. Failing to co-operate in a CPC investigation and/or hearing.

28. Failing to reply appropriately or within a reasonable time to a written enquiry made by the CPC.

29. Continuing treatment of a client where it is no longer indicated or treatment has ceased to be effective or providing unnecessary treatment.

30. Advertising professional services with offers of free product, coupons or discounts on retail products that are coupled with professional services 29. Advertising by making statements that could be derogatory to another provider.

31. Bundling of professional services with retail products.

## APPENDIX 'B'

## Certain terms used in the Code require definition as follows:

- “Advertising” means the public promotion of a Pedorthic business and its services. The advertising may be in the form of print, broadcast, or electronic presentation.
- “Certificate of Registration” is the certification (identified by a registration number) issued by the CPC certifying that a member is in good standing with the CPC and is entitled to practice Pedorthics within Canada. In order to receive this certification a member has met the requirements set out by the CPC.
- “Client” means a person who seeks the advice and professional services of a Pedorthist.
- “Complaints Investigation Committee” is appointed by the Ethics Chair to review the complaint and to conduct a formal investigation into the complaint. The Complaints Investigation Committee may appoint others to help carry out the investigation, including outside investigators.
- “CPC” means The College of Pedorthics of Canada. It is responsible for the regulation and certification of Pedorthists, and has the primary role to protect the public by ensuring standards for quality and practice. The CPC institutes stringent guidelines that assure public safety.
- “Direct Supervision” is outlined in the CPC *Definition of Direct Supervision* statement.
- “Ethics Committee” means a standing committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the CPC. It consists of 6 to 10 members who comprise the *Complaints Investigation Committee*, and the *Discipline Committee* at the discretion of the Registrar of Complaints.
- “Member” means an individual certified and in good standing with the CPC under any of the membership categories.
- “Pedorthic Practitioner” means a member holding a CPC designation and engaged in providing Pedorthic services within their scope of practice as defined by the CPC.
- “Professional” means an individual who provides pedorthic services in exchange for payment in accordance with CPC protocols.
- “Professional Designation” means the distinction earned by individuals who meet criteria for certification set by the CPC and abide by the stringent guidelines set by the CPC and who are therefore accountable for upholding the Pedorthic profession to the highest standards of practice. Canadian Pedorthists can attain the professional designations of C Ped Tech (C), C Ped (C), and/or C Ped MC..

- “Professional Services” are the scope of treatment of the certified Pedorthist that may be applied to his/her patients. A complete list of these services and the certification level to provide these services can be found on the CPC website.
- “Referring Professional” means a professional other than a Pedorthist who advises his/her patient to seek counsel and potential treatment from a certified Pedorthist.  
Note: Most insurance companies require a prescription for orthotics from a professional other than the Pedorthist when reimbursing medical expenses. In Canada, the required referring professional is most often a Medical Doctor (MD).
- “Retail Operations” consist of the sale of non custom/customized products within a Pedorthics facility
- “Treatment” means the provision of Pedorthic services as well as the consultation between health care providers relating to a client to assist in:
  - Alleviating painful or debilitating conditions of the lower limb;
  - Accommodating foot deformities;
  - Re-aligning anatomical structures;
  - Redistributing external and internal forces;
  - Improving balance;
  - Controlling biomechanical function;
  - Accommodating circulatory special requirements; and,
  - Enhancing the actions of limbs compromised as a result of accident, congenital deformity, neural condition, or disease.