

Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics



**COUNSELLOR CODE OF ETHICS
BOARD OF COUNSELLORS (MALAYSIA)**

PURPOSE:

The Board of Counsellors (Malaysia) Code of Ethics serves five main purposes, which are to:

1. provide guidelines to assist counsellors on carrying out their duties professionally. With such guidelines, they will be able to provide the best counselling services as well as foster the counselling profession's values in the best way;
2. create principles that determine ethical conduct as well as best practices;
3. allow the Board of Counsellors (Malaysia) to define ethical duties for all counsellors registered with the Board of Counsellors (Malaysia);
4. provide support to the Board of Counsellor's mission; and to
5. be a foundation for the processing of complaints and inquiries on ethics directed to a counsellor.

CCE contains 8 main sections. This section covers the following matters:

Section A: Counselling Relationship

Section B: Confidentiality, Privileged Communication, and Privacy

Sections C: Professional Responsibility

Section D: Relations with Other Professionals

Section E: Evaluation, Assessment, and Interpretation

Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching

Section G: Research and Publication

Section H: Resolving Ethical Issues

Each section of the CCE begins with an introduction. The introduction to each section discusses the counsellors' ethical behaviour and responsibilities.

When counsellors are faced with ethical dilemmas that are difficult to resolve, they are expected to engage in a carefully considered ethical decision-making process. A difference in opinion among counsellors can and do exist with regards to the ways in which values, ethical principles and ethical standards can be applied when conflict arises. Until now, there is no model on decision making specifically related to the most effective ethics. Counsellors should make use of a credible decision making model which can be scrutinised by the public as well as one that is transparent in the way it is applied. Through this kind of decision making process, we are able to expand the abilities and human potential to develop and advance.

Section A: Counselling relationship

Introduction

Counsellors facilitate client growth and development in ways that fosters the interest and welfare of the clients and promote the formation of healthy relationships. Counsellors also actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients they serve. Counsellors explore their own cultural identity and identify how these affect their values and beliefs about the counselling process. Counsellors are encouraged to contribute to society by devoting a portion of their professional activities to services which offer little or no financial return (*pro bono publico*).

A.1. Welfare of those provided service by the counsellor

A.1. a. Primary responsibility

The primary responsibility of a counsellor is to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients.

A.1.b. Records

Counsellors maintain important records when rendering professional services to their clients and also when required by law, regulations, or agency and institutional procedures. Counsellors include sufficient and timely documentation in the client records to facilitate the delivery and continuity of services required. Counsellors take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in these records accurately reflect client progress and services provided. If mistakes are made in those records, counsellors take steps to properly rectify those mistakes according to agency or institutional policies.

A.1.c. Counselling plans

Counsellors and clients work jointly in devising an integrated counselling plan that guarantees success and are consistent with the abilities and circumstances

of clients. Counsellor and client often review counselling plans to assess their continued viability and effectiveness, while respecting clients' freedom of choice.

A.1.d. Support network involvement

Counsellors should recognize that support networks which provide assistance to clients hold various meanings in the lives of clients and should consider enlisting the support, understanding, and involvement of others (e.g, religious/spiritual/community leaders, family members, friends) as a positive resource when appropriate, with client consent.

A.1.e. Employment requirements

Counsellors should work jointly with their clients to consider employment consistent with the clients overall abilities, vocational limits, physical limits, general appearance, patterns of interest and attitude, social skills, education, general qualifications and requirements. Where appropriate, counsellors with relevant training in career development, should assist with placing clients in positions consistent with their interests, culture and welfare, employer, and/or the public.

A.2. Informed consent in the counselling relationship

A.2.a. Informed consent

Clients have the freedom to choose whether to enter into or remain in a counselling relationship. Clients need adequate information about the pros and cons of counselling and the counsellor. Counsellors have an obligation to explain in writing and verbally to clients the rights and responsibilities of both counsellor and client. Informed consent is an ongoing part of the counselling process, and the counsellors should appropriately document discussions of informed consent throughout the counselling relationship.

A.2.b. Type of information required

Counsellors shall explicitly explain to clients the nature of all services provided. They inform clients of issues such as (but not limited to): purposes, goals, techniques, procedures, limits, potential risks and benefits of service; counsellors relevant qualifications, credentials, and experience; continuation of services upon the incapacitation or death of the counsellor, and other pertinent information. Counsellors shall take steps to ensure that client understand the implications of diagnosis, intended use of tests and reports, fees and how they charge. Clients have the right to confidentiality and to be provided with an explanation of its limits (including how supervisors and/or treatment team professionals are involved); to obtain clear information about their records; to participate in ongoing counselling plans; and to refuse any services or modality changes. They have the right to be advised of the consequence of such refusal.

A.2.c. Developmental and cultural sensitivity

Counsellor shall communicate information in ways that are both developmentally and culturally appropriate. Counsellor shall use clear and understandable language when discussing issues related to informed consent. When clients have difficulty understanding the language used by the counsellor, the counsellor shall provide necessary services (e.g arrange for a qualified interpreter or translator) to ensure comprehension by clients. Counsellor shall consider the implication and procedures of informed consent, and where possible, make adjustments to their practice accordingly.

A.2.d. Inability to give consent

When counselling minors or other persons unable to provide voluntary consent, counsellors must seek the assent of clients to services which will be provided from a legally authorised person and involve them in the decision making process where appropriate. Counsellors shall recognize the need to balance the ethical rights of clients to make choices, their capacity to give consent or assent

to receive services, and parental or familial legal rights and responsibilities to protect these clients and make decisions on their behalf.

A.3. Clients served by others

When counsellors learn that their clients receive services from other mental health professionals, they must request release from clients to contact the other professional and inform them about their involvement and strive to establish collaborative professional relationships.

A.4. Avoiding harm and imposing values

A.4.a. Avoiding harm

Counsellor shall avoid causing harm to their clients, trainees and research partners. Counsellor shall also endeavour to minimize or to remedy unavoidable or unanticipated harm.

A.4.b Personal values

Counsellors shall be aware of and avoid imposing on others their own values, attitude, beliefs and behaviours which are inconsistent with the objectives of counselling. Counsellors shall also respect the diversity of clients, trainees and research participants.

A.5. Roles and relationship with clients

A.5.a. Current clients

Sexual or romantic counsellor–client interaction or relationships with current clients, their romantic partners or their family members are prohibited.

A.5.b. Former clients

Sexual or romantic counsellor–client interactions or relationships, their romantic partners or their family members are prohibited for a period of 2 years following

the last professional contract. Before engaging in sexual or romantic interactions or relationships with former clients, their romantic partners or family members 2 years following the last professional contract, the counsellor shall demonstrate forethought on the consequences and document (in written form) whether the interaction or relationship can be viewed as exploitive and/or may be construed as potentially harmful to the former client. In cases of potential exploitation and/or harm to the former client, the counsellor shall avoid entering into such interaction or relationship.

A.5.c. Non-professional interactions or relationships (other than sexual or romantic interactions or relationships)

Non-professional relationships between counsellor and client, former clients, their romantic partners or their family members should be minimized, unless those interactions are potentially beneficial to the client.

A.5.d. Potentially beneficial interaction

When a non-professional interaction between counsellor and client or former client or other individuals significantly involved with them are potentially beneficial to them, the counsellor must document (if possible) in case records before engaging in interaction, the rationale behind involvement in such interaction, its benefits and anticipated consequences. Such interaction shall be initiated with the consent of the client. In the event of unanticipated harm to the client or former client or individuals significantly involved with them, due to non-professional interaction, the counsellor shall present evidence of attempts to remedy such harm. Examples of potential benefits through interaction includes (but not limited to) attending formal events (e.g. weddings/engagements or conventions), purchasing a service or product supplied by the client or former client, visiting an ill family member, mutual membership of an association, professional organisation or community.

A.5.e. Role changes in the professional relationship

When counsellor change a role from the original or most recent contract, the counsellor shall obtain an informed consent from the client and explain the client's right to refuse services related to the change. Example of role changes include:

1. changing from individual counselling to family counselling or vice versa;
2. changing from an non-forensic evaluative role to a therapeutic role, or vice versa; and
3. changing from a counsellor to a researcher role (i.e inviting a client to participate in research), or vice versa; and
4. changing from a counsellor to a mediator role, or vice versa.

Client must be fully informed of any anticipated consequences (e.g., financial, legal, personal, or therapeutic) of counsellor role changes.

A.6. Role and relationship at individual, group, institutional and societal level

A.6.a. Advocacy

When appropriate, counsellors advocate at individual, group, institutional, and societal levels to address potential barriers and obstacles that inhibit access and/or the growth and development of clients.

A.6.b Confidentiality and advocacy

Counsellors shall obtain client consent prior to engaging in advocacy efforts on behalf of an identifiable client to improve the provision of services and shall work toward removal of systemic barriers or obstacles that inhibit client access, growth, and development.

A.7. Multiple clients

When a counsellor agrees to provide counselling services to two or more persons who have a relationship, the counsellor shall clarify at the outset which

person or persons are clients and the nature of the relationships the counsellor will have with each involved person. If it becomes apparent that the counsellor may be called upon to perform potentially conflicting roles, the counsellor will clarify, adjust, or withdraw from such roles appropriately.

A.8. Group work

A.8.a. Screening

Counsellors screen prospective group counselling/therapy participants. To the extent possible, counsellors select participants whose needs and goals are compatible with the goals of the group, who will not impede the group process, and whose well-being will not be jeopardized by the group experience.

A.8.b. Protecting clients

In a group setting, counsellors shall take reasonable precautions to protect clients from physical, emotional, or psychological trauma.

A.9. *End-of-life care for terminally ill clients*

A.9.a. Quality of care

Counsellor shall endeavour to take the following steps that will enable client to:

1. receive high quality physical, emotional, social and spiritual end-of-life care;
2. practice the highest self-determination possible;
3. given every opportunity to be involved in making an informed decision on their end-of-life care; and
4. receive complete and adequate assessment of their ability to make rational and competent decisions for themselves by a mental health professional experienced in end-of-life care.

A.9.b. Competency, counsellor options and referral

Once aware of personal, moral and competency issues related to end-of-life decisions, a counsellor may choose to either treat or refuse to treat a terminally ill client who wishes to explore their end-of-life options. Counsellor shall provide relevant referral information to ensure the client receives the help required.

A.9.c. Confidentiality

Counsellors who provide services to terminally ill individuals who are considering hastening their own deaths have the option to maintain confidentiality. It depends on the applicable laws and the specific circumstances of the situation and after seeking consultation or supervision from appropriate professional and legal parties.

A.10. Fees and exchange of goods/services

A.10.a. Receiving fees from agency's client

Counsellor shall refuse private payments or other payments from persons qualified to receive such services through the counsellor's agency employer or institution. Policy of a particular agency may provide explicit provisions for agency clients to receive counselling services from its employees in their private practice. In such instances, the clients must be informed of other options open to them should they seek private counselling services.

A.10.b. Establishing fees

In establishing fees for professional counselling services, counsellors shall consider the financial status and locality of the clients. If counsellor fee structure is unsuitable for the client, the counsellor shall assist the client in locating comparable, affordable services.

A.10.c. Non-payment of fees

If counsellor intends to use collection agencies or take legal action to collect fees from clients who do not pay for services as agreed upon, they should first inform client of intended actions and offer clients an opportunity to make payment.

A.10.d. Exchanging of goods/services

Counsellors may exchange goods/services only if the relationship does not result in exploitation or harm to the client/counsellor and does not put the counsellor in a profitable position, if the client requests it, and if such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the community. Counsellors shall consider the cultural implications related of exchanging goods/services and discuss relevant concerns with the clients and document such agreement in a clear written contract.

A.10.e. Receiving gifts

Counsellors understand the challenges of accepting gifts from clients and recognize that in some cultures, small gifts are a token of respect and gratitude. When determining whether or not to accept a gift from client, counsellor shall take into account the therapeutic relationship, the monetary value of the gift, the client's motivation for giving the gift, and the counsellor's motivation for wanting to accept or decline the gift.

A.11. Termination and referral

A.11.a. Abandonment of client is prohibited

Counsellor shall not abandon or neglect clients in counselling. Counsellor shall assist in making appropriate arrangements for the continuation of treatment, during interruptions such as vacations, illness, and following termination of services.

A.11.b. Incapability to assist clients

If counsellors lack the competence to be of professional assistance to client, they shall avoid entering or continuing counselling relationships. Counsellor shall be knowledgeable about culturally and clinically appropriate referral resources and suggest these alternatives. If clients decline the suggested referrals, counsellor shall discontinue the counselling relationship with the client.

A.11.c. Appropriate termination

Counsellor must terminate a counselling relationship when it becomes apparent that client no longer requires assistance, is not likely to benefit, or is being harmed by continued counselling. Counsellors may terminate counselling when in jeopardy of harm by the client or by another person with whom the client has a relationship, or when client do not pay fees as agreed upon. Counsellor provides pre-termination counselling services and recommend other counselling practitioners when necessary.

A.11.d. Appropriate transfer or services

When a counsellor refers a client to other professionals, they must ensure that the clinical and administrative processes are completed. In this circumstance, open communication must be maintained with both clients and professionals.

A.12. Technological application

A.12.a. Benefits and limitation

Counsellor shall inform the client of the benefits and limitations of using information technology applications in the provision of counselling services and how charges are applied. Such technologies includes (but are not limited to) computer hardware and software, telephones, websites, Internet, online assessment tools and other communication devices.

A.12.b. Technology-assisted services

When providing technology-assisted distance counselling services, counsellors shall take reasonable efforts to determine that clients are intellectually, emotionally, and physically capable of using the technology and that the use of technology is appropriate for the needs of the client.

A.12.c. Inappropriate services

When technology-assisted distance counselling services are deemed inappropriate by the counsellor and client, the counsellor shall consider delivering service face-to-face.

A.12.d. Access

Counsellor shall provide reasonable access in the use of computers when providing technology-assisted distance counselling services.

A.12.e. Law and statutes

Counsellor shall ensure that the use of technology does not violate any national or international laws and complies with all relevant statutes.

A.12.f. Assistance

Counsellor is required to enlist the assistance of legal, technical and business experts when using technology across national boundaries.

A.12.g. Technology and informed consent

As part of the process of establishing informed consent, counsellor shall do the following:

1. discuss issues related to the difficulty in maintaining confidentiality of communication via electronic channels;
2. make known to clients of all colleagues, supervisors, and employees such as IT administrators that may have authorised or unauthorised access to electronic transmission;

3. encourage clients to recognize all users whether authorised or unauthorised, including family members and other employees who have access to any technology that may be used by the client in the counselling process;
4. inform client on the relevant local or international legal rights and limitations which regulates the practices of a profession;
5. utilising encrypted website and e-mail communication to assure confidentiality, where necessary;
6. where use of encrypted websites and e-mails are limited, counsellor shall inform this to the client and limit electronic transmissions to general communication that is not specific about the client;
7. inform client if archives and records of transactions are stored and for how long it is stored;
8. discuss about the possibility of technological failure and alternative ways to ensure delivery of service; and

A.12.h. Websites

Counsellors who have websites (Internet) shall do the following:

1. regularly ensure that electronic links are working and are professionally appropriate.
2. provide an alternative method for clients to contact the counsellor in case of technology failure.
3. provide electronic links with the Board of Counsellors to protect user rights and facilitate the solving ethical issues.
4. provide a method to verify clients identity.
5. obtain written consent from the legal guardian or authorised representative before providing services to a minor, an incapacitated adult or an adult unable to give voluntary consent.
6. strive to provide a website accessible to persons with disabilities.
7. strive to provide translation for clients with different primary language, and at the same time acknowledge the imperfect nature of such translations.

8. assist clients in determining the validity and reliability of information on the website and other technological applications.

Section B: Confidentiality, privileged communication, and privacy

Introduction

Counsellors recognize that trust is the cornerstone of counselling relationships. Thus, the counsellor shall earn the trust of clients by creating an ongoing partnership by establishing and upholding appropriate boundaries, and maintain confidentiality. Counsellors must communicate confidentiality parameters in a culturally competent manner.

B.1. Respecting client rights

B.1.a. Multicultural and diversity considerations

Counsellors need to maintain awareness and sensitivity towards the cultural meanings of confidentiality and privacy. Counsellor shall respect the different view points on the disclosure of information. Counsellor should also hold ongoing discussions with clients on how, when and with whom information is to be shared.

B.1.b. Respect for privacy

Counsellor needs to respect client's right to privacy. Counsellor should only request private information from client when it is beneficial to the counselling process.

B.1.c. Respect for confidentiality

Counsellor shall not share confidential information without the consent of client or without sound legal or ethical justification.

B.1.d. Explanation of limitations

At the early stages and throughout the counselling process, counsellors are required to inform client of the limitations to confidentiality and identify situations in which confidentiality must be breached.

B.2. Exceptions

B.2.a. Harm and legal requirements

The general requirement that counsellors keep confidential information no longer apply when the disclosure is necessary to protect the client or identified others from serious and foreseeable harm, or when legal requirements demands that the confidential information must be revealed. Counsellors shall consult with other professionals when in doubt as to the validity of an exception. Additional considerations must be applied when addressing end-of-life issues.

B.2.b. Contagious and life-threatening diseases

When clients disclose that they have a disease commonly known to be both communicable and life threatening, counsellors may be justified in disclosing information to identifiable third parties, if the parties are known to be at serious risk of contracting the disease. Prior to making a disclosure, counsellors shall validate the existence of such diagnosis and assess the intent of clients to inform the third parties about their disease or to engage in any behaviours that may be harmful to an identifiable third party.

B.2.c. Court-ordered disclosure

When ordered by a court to release confidential or privileged information without a clients permission, counsellor shall seek to obtain written informed consent from the client or take steps to to prohibit the disclosure, or ensure the disclosure is limited as narrowly as possible, because of potential harm to the client or counselling relationship.

B.2.d. Minimal disclosure

To the extent possible, client shall be informed prior to the disclosure of confidential information and are involved in the disclosure decision-making process. When circumstances require the disclosure of confidential information, only essential information is revealed.

B.3. Information shared with others

B.3.a. Subordinates

Counsellors make every effort to ensure that privacy and confidentiality of clients are maintained by subordinates ,including employees, supervisees, students, clerical assistants, and volunteers.

B.3.b. Treatment team

When treatment provided to client involves ongoing review or participation by a treatment team, client shall be informed of the team's existence and composition, information shared, and purpose of sharing such information.

B.3.c. Confidential settings

Counsellors discuss confidential information only in a setting where they can reasonably ensure client privacy.

B.3.d. Third party payers

Information to third party payers can only be provided by the counsellor with the client's permission.

B.3.e. Transmitting confidential information

Counsellor shall ensure the confidentiality of information transmitted through the usage of computers, electronic mail, facsimile, telephone, voice mail, answering machines, and other computer or electronic technology.

B.3.f. Deceased client

Counsellor shall protect a deceased client's confidentiality in accordance with legal requirements and agency and institutional policies.

B.4 Groups and families

B.4.a. Group work

In group work, counsellors shall clearly explain the importance and parameters of confidentiality to the specific group.

B.4.b. Family and couples counselling

In couples and family counselling, counsellor shall clearly define who is considered "the client" discuss the expectations and limitations of confidentiality. Counsellor shall seek the agreement and document in writing such agreement among all parties involved who are capable of providing consent about each individual right relating to the confidentiality and any obligation to protect the confidentiality of information known.

B.5. Clients lacking capacity to give informed consent

B.5.a. Responsibility to clients

When providing counselling to clients who are minors or adult clients who lack the capacity to give voluntary, informed consent, counsellor shall protect the confidentiality of information received in the counselling relationship as specified by the law, written regulations and applicable ethical standards.

B.5.b. Responsibility to parents and legal guardians

Counsellor shall inform parents and legal guardians about the roles of a counsellor and the confidential nature of the counselling relationship. Counsellor shall be sensitive to the cultural diversities of families and respect the inherent rights and responsibilities of the parents/guardians regarding the welfare of their children/charges according to the law. Counsellors shall work to establish collaborative relationships with parents/guardians to best serve clients.

B.5.c. Release of confidential information

When counselling minors or adult clients who lack the capacity to give voluntary consent to release confidential information, counsellors shall seek permission from an appropriate third party to do so. In such instances, counsellors shall inform the client consistent with their level of understanding and take culturally appropriate measures to safeguard the client's confidentiality.

B.6. Records

B.6.a. Confidentiality of records

Counsellor shall ensure that records are kept in a secure location and ensure that only that only authorised persons have access to those records.

B.6.b. Permission to record

Counsellors shall obtain permission from the client prior to recording through an electronic device or by any other means.

B.6.c. Permission to observe

Counsellors shall obtain permission from clients prior to observing a counselling session, reviewing session transcripts, or viewing recording sessions with supervisors, faculty, peers, or others within the training environment.

B.6.d. Client access

Counsellors shall provide reasonable access to records and copies of records when requested by competent clients. Counsellors shall limit client access to their records, or portions of their records, only when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause harm to the client. Counsellors shall document the request of clients and the rationale for withholding some or all of the records in the files of clients. In situations involving multiple clients, counsellor shall provide individual clients with only parts of records that relate

directly to them and do not include confidential information related to any other client.

B.6.e. Assistance with records

When clients request access to their records, counsellors shall provide assistance in interpreting those counselling records.

B.6.f. Disclosure or transfer

Unless exceptions to confidentiality exists, counsellors shall obtain written permission from clients to disclose or transfer records to a third party, steps shall be taken to ensure the receiver of counselling records are sensitive to their confidential nature.

B.6.g. Storage and disposal of records after termination

Counsellors shall store records following termination of services to ensure reasonable access in the future. These records shall be stored in accordance to methods of record preservation. Client records and sensitive material shall be disposed of in a manner that protects clients confidentiality. For records which are artistic in nature, counsellor shall obtain the permission from the client (or guardian) on the way records or documents are stored or disposed.

B.7. Research and training

B.7.a. Institution approval

When institution approval is required, the counsellor shall provide accurate information about their research and obtain approval prior to conducting research. Research shall be conducted in accordance with certified research protocols.

B.7.b. Adherence to guidelines

Counsellor shall understand and adhere to state, federal, agency or institutional policies and applicable guidelines related to confidentiality in conducting their research.

B.7.c. Confidentiality of information obtained from research

Violation of guidelines applicable to participants' privacy and confidentiality will affect their participation in the research. The researcher shall store all research records securely. They shall explain to the participants the risks relevant to a violation of privacy and confidentiality guidelines and inform participants of the anticipated limitations to confidentiality.

B.7.d. Disclosure of research information

Counsellors are prohibited from disclosing private information that may lead to an identification of a research participant, unless prior consent is obtained from the person concerned. Use of data obtained through counselling relationships for the purposes of training, research or publication shall be limited to contents which does not expose the identity of the individuals involved.

B.7.e. Consent to be identified.

Identification of clients, students or supervisees for the purposes of presentations or publications is only allowed after they review and approve such presentations or publications.

B.8. Consultation**B.8.a. Consent**

When acting as a consultant, a counsellor shall obtain consent from every party involved in the rights of each individual on confidentiality, obligation of each individual to protect confidential information, and limitations to confidentiality shared with others.

B.8.b. Respecting privacy

Information obtained from consultation relationships shall be discussed for professional purposes only with the individual directly involved in that case. Written and oral reports shall only contain data beneficial to the purpose of consultation. Every effort shall be taken to protect the clients identity and in preventing an unwarranted breach of privacy.

B.8.c. Disclosure of confidential information

When consulting with a colleague, the counsellor is prohibited from disclosing confidential information which may lead to the identification of the client or other individuals, or organisations which they are related to professionally that needs to be kept confidential unless prior consent has been obtained from those individuals or organisations. If disclosure cannot be avoided, disclosure of information shall be to the extent necessary to achieve the consultation purpose.

Section C: Professional responsibility

Introduction

Counsellor must aspire to communicate openly, honestly and accurately in dealing with the public and other professionals. They shall practice in a non-discriminatory environment, within the boundaries of professional and personal competence, and abide by the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics. Counsellors shall actively participate in local, state, and national associations that foster the development and improvement of counselling. Counsellors shall advocate to promote changes at the individual, group, institutional, and societal levels that improve the quality of life for individuals and groups and remove barriers to the provision or access of appropriate services being offered. Counsellors have a responsibility to the public to engage in counselling practices that are based on accurate and rigorous research methodologies. In addition, counsellors shall engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their own emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities.

C.1. Knowledge about standards

Counsellors have a responsibility to read, understand, and follow the Board of Counsellor Code of Ethics and adhere to applicable laws and regulations.

C.2. Professional competence

C.2.a. Boundaries of competence

Counsellors practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Counsellors shall gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, and skills pertinent to working with a diverse client population.

C.2.b New speciality areas

Counsellors practice in speciality areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, and supervised experience. While developing skills in new speciality areas, counsellors take steps to ensure the competence of their work and protect others from possible harm.

C.2.c Qualified for employment

Counsellors accept employment only for positions for which they are qualified given their education, training, supervised experience, professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Counsellors shall hire for professional counselling positions only individuals who are qualified and competent for those positions.

C.2.d Monitor effectiveness

Counsellors continually monitor their effectiveness as professionals and take steps to improve when necessary. Counsellors in private or public sectors take steps to seek supervision from peers who are registered and certified to evaluate their ability and efficacy as counsellors.

C.2.e Consultation on ethical obligations

Counsellors take reasonable steps to consult with other counsellors, or related professionals when they have questions regarding their ethical obligations or professional practice.

C.2.f Continuing education

Counsellors recognize the need for continuing education of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity. Counsellors also take steps to maintain their competence in the skills they use, are open to new procedures, and remain informed regarding diverse and specific populations involved in their line of work.

C.2.g. Impairment

Counsellors monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services if those impairments may cause harm clients or other individual. They should seek assistance for problems that can impair their professional services. If necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work. Counsellors assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted. They also intervene as appropriate when necessary to prevent imminent harm to clients.

C.2.h. Counsellor incapacitation or termination of practice

When a counsellor terminates their practice, they follow the procedures provided to transfer the clients and their files. Counsellor prepares and deliver to peers identified as 'records custodian' a plan to transfer clients and records if the counsellor is incapacitated, terminates practices, or deceased.

C.3. Advertising and soliciting clients

C.3.a. Accurate advertising

When advertising or otherwise representing their services to the public, counsellors shall identify their credentials in an accurate manner that is not false, misleading, deceptive, or fraudulent.

C.3.b. Testimonial

Counsellors who want to use testimonials is prohibited from soliciting them from current clients, former clients, or any other persons, if it may cause harm to them.

C.3.c. Statements by others

Counsellor makes efforts to ensure that statements made by others about them or the counselling profession is accurate and true.

C.3.d. Recruiting clients in the work place

Counsellors do not use their places of employment or institutional affiliation to recruit clients, supervisees, or consultees for the interest of their private practices.

C.3.e. Products and training advertisement

Counsellors who develop products related to their profession or conduct workshops or training events ensure that the advertisements concerning these products or events are accurate and true. They shall also provide adequate information for clients and consumers to make informed choices.

C.3.f. Promoting to those served

Counsellors are prohibited from using counselling, teaching, training, or supervisory relationships to promote their products or training events in a manner that is deceptive or would exert undue influence on individuals who may be vulnerable to influence or harm. However, counsellor educators may adopt textbooks they have authored for instructional purposes.

C.4. Professional qualifications

C.4.a. Accurate and true representation

Counsellors claim or imply only professional qualifications, continuing education and specialized training actually completed and correct any misrepresentations of their qualifications by others. Counsellors shall also truthfully represent the qualifications of their professional colleagues. Counsellors must clearly distinguish between paid and volunteer work experience.

C.4.b. Credentials

Counsellors shall claim and display only Certificate of Registration and Certificate of Practice that are current and in good standing.

C.4.c. Educational Degrees

Counsellors shall clearly differentiate between earned and honorary degrees.

C.4.d. Implying doctorate level competence

Counsellors shall clearly state their highest earned degree in counselling or a closely related field. Counsellors are prohibited from implying that they hold a doctoral-level competence and use the title 'Dr.' when they only possess a foundation or master's degree in counselling or a related field.

C.4.e. Accreditation Status Program

Counsellors shall accurately represent the accreditation status of their degree program at the time the degree was earned.

C.4.f. Professional status

A counsellor will only acquire professional status when registered with the Board of Counsellors. A Registered Counsellor shall differentiate clearly their membership status with the Board of Counsellors, whether it is current active memberships or expired memberships.

C.5. Discrimination

Counsellors are prohibited from condoning or engaging in discrimination based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, marital/partnership status, language preference, socio-economic status, or any basis prescribed by law. They are also prohibited from discriminating against clients, students, employees, supervisees or research participants in a manner which causes a negative impact to the individual.

C.6. Public responsibility

C.6.a. Sexual harassment

Counsellors are prohibited from engaging or condoning acts of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as sexual solicitation, touching, verbal

or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature, which occurs in the context of professional activities or roles. Whether such behaviour

1. is unwelcome, offensive, or creates a hostile workplace or learning environment, the counsellor knows or has been informed of such matters; or
2. sufficiently severe or intense to be perceived as sexual harassment by a reasonable person in a context where the behaviour took place.

Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense or severe act, or multiple persistent or pervasive acts.

C.6.b. Reports to third parties

Counsellors shall be accurate, honest, and objective in reporting their professional activities and judgements to appropriate third parties, including courts, health insurance companies, those who are the recipients of evaluation reports, and others.

C.6.c. Media presentations

When counsellors provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, recordings, technology-based applications, printed materials, mailed material, or other media, they shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that:

1. the statements are based on appropriate professional counselling literature and practice,
2. the statements are otherwise consistent with the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics, and
3. the recipients of the information are not encouraged to infer that a professional counselling relationship has been established.

C.6.d. Exploitation of others

Counsellors are prohibited from exploiting others in their professional relationships.

C.6.e. Scientific basis for treatment modalities

Counsellors shall use techniques/procedures/modalities that are grounded in theory and/or have an empirical or scientific foundation. If otherwise, counsellor shall state the techniques/procedures/modalities used as "not proven" or "in development". They also explain potential risks and ethical considerations when using those techniques/procedures/modalities, and take appropriate steps to protect client from anticipated harm.

C.7 Responsibility to other professionals

C.7.a Personal public statements

When making personal statements in a public context, counsellors shall clarify that they are speaking from their personal perspectives and that they are not speaking on behalf of all counsellors or the profession.

Section D: Relationship with other professionals

Introduction

Professional counsellors recognize that the quality of their interactions with colleagues can influence the quality of services provided to clients. They work to become knowledgeable about colleagues within and outside the field of counselling. Counsellors develop positive working relationships and systems of communication with colleagues to enhance services to clients.

D.1 Relationships with colleagues, employers and employees

D.1.a Different approaches

Counsellors shall be respectful of the various approaches to counselling services which may differ from their own. Counsellors shall also respect the traditions and practices of other professional groups they work with.

D.1.b Forming relationships

Counsellors shall work to develop and strengthen relationships with colleagues from other disciplines to best serve clients.

D.1.c Interdisciplinary teamwork

Counsellors who are members of interdisciplinary teams delivering multifaceted services to clients shall remain focused on how to best serve clients. They shall also participate in and contribute to decision making processes that affect the well-being of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the counselling profession and those of colleagues from other disciplines.

D.1.d. Confidentiality

When counsellors are required by law, institutional policy, or extraordinary circumstances to serve in more than one role in judicial or administrative proceedings, they shall clarify role expectations and the limitations of confidentiality with their colleagues.

D.1.e. Establishing professional and ethical obligations

Counsellors who are members of interdisciplinary teams shall clarify professional and ethical obligations of the team as a whole and of its individual members. When a team decision raises ethical concerns, counsellors first attempt to resolve the concern within the team. If they cannot reach resolution among team members, counsellors pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client well-being.

D.1.f. Personnel selection and distribution of duty

Counsellor shall select a competent personnel and assign them duties compatible with their skill and experience.

D.1.g. Employer policies

The acceptance of employment in an agency or institution implies that counsellors are in agreement with its general policies and principles. Counsellors shall strive to reach agreement with employers to allow for changes in institutional policy conducive to the growth and development of clients.

D.1.h. Negative policies and practices

Counsellors shall alert their employers of inappropriate policies and practices. They shall attempt to effect changes in such policies or procedures through constructive action within the organization. When such policies are potentially disruptive or damaging to clients or may limit the effectiveness of services provided and change cannot be affected, counsellors shall take appropriate further action. Such action may include referral to appropriate certification, accreditation, or licensure organizations, or voluntary termination of employment.

D.1.i. Protection from punitive action

Counsellors do not harass a colleague or employee or dismiss an employee who has acted in a responsible and ethical manner to expose inappropriate employer policies or practices.

D.2. Consultation

D.2.a. Consultant competency

Counsellors shall take reasonable steps to ensure that they have the appropriate resources and competencies when providing consultation services. Counsellors shall also provide appropriate referral resources when requested or needed.

D.2.b. Understanding consultees

When providing consultation services, counsellor shall clear and understandable language with the consultee about the definition of problems, objectives, or expected consequences from the chosen intervention.

D.2.c. Consultant objectives

Consultation is a form of relationship between consultant and consultee whereby the consultees ability to adapt and grow is nurtured and encourage consistently towards self-instruction.

D.2.d. Informed consent in consultation

When providing consultation services, counsellors have an obligation to review, in writing and verbally, the rights and responsibilities of both counsellors and consultees. Counsellors shall use clear and understandable language to inform all parties involved about the purpose of the services to be provided, relevant costs, potential risks and benefits, and the limits of confidentiality. Counsellors work together with the consultee to clearly define problems, set goals to change, and identify consequences from the chosen intervention based on culture and as appropriate to the consultees needs.

Section E: Evaluation, assessment, and interpretation

Introduction

Counsellors shall use assessment as one component of the counselling process, taking into account the clients' personal and cultural context. Counsellors shall promote the well-being of individual clients or groups of clients by developing and using appropriate educational, psychological, or career assessments.

E.1 General

E.1.a Assessment

The primary purpose of educational, psychological and career assessments are to provide a valid and reliable measure, whether absolutely or comparatively. These include, measurement of abilities, personalities, interests, intelligence, achievements, and performance. Counsellor shall be aware that interpretation of statements in this section refers to qualitative and quantitative assessments.

E.1.b. Client welfare

Counsellors do not misuse assessment results and interpretations. They shall take reasonable steps to prevent others from misusing the information provided using these techniques, Counsellors respect the client's right to know the results, the interpretations made, and the bases for counsellors' conclusions and recommendations.

E.2. Competence to use and interpret assessment instruments

E.2.a. Limits to competence

Counsellors shall use only those testing and assessment services for which they have been trained and are competent. Counsellors using technology-assisted test interpretations are trained in the construct being measured and the specific instrument being used. Counsellors shall also take reasonable measures to ensure the proper use of psychological and career assessment techniques by persons under their supervision.

E.2.b. Appropriate use

Counsellors are responsible for the appropriate application, scoring, and interpretation of instruments used. Use of assessment instruments shall be relevant to the needs of the client, whether they score and interpret such assessments themselves or use technology or other services.

E.2.c. Decisions based on results

Counsellors responsible for decisions involving individuals or policies that are based on assessment results shall have a thorough understanding on the aspect of education, psychology and career measurements. This includes the criteria of validity, research on assessments and guidelines for developing and utilising assessment instruments.

E.3. Informed consent on assessment

E.3.a. Explanation to clients

Prior to assessment, counsellors shall explain the nature and purposes of assessment and the specific use of results to test participants. The explanation shall be given in terms and language that the client (or other legally authorized person on behalf of the client) can understand, unless an exception has been explicitly agreed upon in advance. Counsellor shall also take into account the personal or cultural context of the client, clients level to understanding the assessment results, and impact of the assessment results on the client.

E.3.b. Receiver of assessment results

Counsellors shall consider the welfare, explicit understanding, and prior agreement in determining who will receive the assessment results. Counsellor shall also include accurate and appropriate interpretations with the every release of individual or group assessment results.

E.4. Release of data to qualified professionals

Counsellors shall release assessment data in which the client is identified only with the consent of the client or the client's legal representative to persons recognized by counsellors as qualified to interpret the data.

E.5. Diagnosis of mental disorders

E.5.a. Proper diagnosis

Counsellors shall take special care when diagnosing mental disorders. Assessment techniques (including personal interviews) used to determine client care (e.g., locus of treatment, type of treatment, recommended follow-up) are carefully selected and appropriately used.

E.5.b. Cultural sensitivity

Counsellors recognize that culture affects the manner in which clients' problems are defined. Clients' socio-economic and cultural experiences are considered when diagnosing mental disorders.

E.5.c. Historical and social prejudices in the diagnosis of pathology

Counsellors shall recognize historical and social prejudices in the misdiagnosis and determining the pathology of certain individuals and groups. They shall also be aware of the role of mental health professionals in contributing and continuing those prejudices through diagnosis and treatment.

E.5.d. Refraining from diagnosis

Counsellors may refrain from making and/or reporting a diagnosis if they believe that it would cause harm to the client or others.

E.6. Instrument selection

E.6.a. Appropriateness of instruments

Counsellors shall carefully consider the validity, reliability, psychometric limitations, and appropriateness of instruments when selecting assessments instruments.

E.6.b. Referral information

If a client is referred to a third party for assessment, the counsellor shall provide specific objective data about the client to ensure that appropriate assessment instruments are utilized.

E.6.c. Multicultural population

Counsellors shall be careful when choosing assessment instruments for multicultural population to avoid using instruments lacking psychometric features appropriate for the specific client population.

E.7. Conditions of assessment administration

E.7.a. Administration conditions

Counsellor shall administer assessments under the same conditions that were established in the standardization process of the instrument. When assessments are not administered under standard conditions, as may be necessary to accommodate clients with disabilities, or when unusual behaviour or irregularities occur during the administration, those conditions are noted in interpretation. Failing which, the assessment results may be designated as invalid or of questionable validity.

E.7.b. Technology based administration

Counsellors shall ensure that the assessment administration process functions properly and provide clients with accurate results, when technological or electronic methods are used in the administration.

E.7.c. Unsupervised assessments

Unless the assessment instrument is designed, intended, and validated for self-administration and/or scoring, counsellors are not permitted to use the instrument without sufficient supervision.

E.7.d. Disclosure of favourable conditions

Candidates shall be informed of the conditions that will result in the most favourable assessment results prior to conducting the assessment.

E. 8. Multicultural/diversity issues in assessment

Counsellor shall be cautious when using different assessment techniques normed on populations other than that of the client. Counsellors shall recognize the effects of age, colour, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, language preference, religion, spirituality, and socio-economic status on test administration and interpretation. Counsellor shall also interpret test result in a perspective appropriate with the factors above.

E.9. Scoring and interpretation of assessments

E.9.a. Reporting

When counsellors report assessment, they shall indicate reservation that exists regarding validity or reliability due to circumstances of the assessment or inappropriateness of the norms for the person tested.

E.9.b. Research instruments

Counsellors shall exercise caution when interpreting the results of instruments not having sufficient technical data to support respondent results. The specific purposes for the use of such instruments shall be stated explicitly to the candidate taking the test.

E.9.c. Assessment services

Counsellors who provide assessment, scoring, and interpretation services to support the assessment process shall confirm the validity of such interpretations. They shall accurately describe the purpose, norms, validity, reliability, and applications of the procedures and any special qualifications applicable to their use. Automated test interpretation shall be considered as a consultation between professionals. The formal responsibility of a consultant is towards the consultee, however the primary and utmost importance are to the clients.

E.10. Assessment security

Counsellors shall maintain the integrity and security of tests and other assessments techniques consistent with legal and contractual obligations. Counsellors shall not appropriate, reproduce, or modify assessment instruments or parts thereof without acknowledgement and permission from the publisher.

E.11. Obsolete assessment and outdated results

Counsellors shall not use data or results from assessments that are obsolete or outdated for the current purpose. Counsellors shall make every effort to prevent the misuse of obsolete measures and assessment data by others.

E.12. Assessment construction

Counsellors shall use established scientific procedures, relevant standards, and current professional knowledge for developing assessment instruments.

E.13. Forensic evaluation: evaluation for legal proceedings

E.13.a. Primary obligations

When providing forensic evaluations, the primary obligation of counsellors is to produce objective findings that can be substantiated based on information and techniques appropriate to the evaluation process. This may include examination of the individual and/or review of records. Counsellors are qualified to form professional opinions based on their professional knowledge and expertise that

can be supported by the data gathered in evaluations. Counsellors shall define the limits of their reports or testimony, especially when an examination of the individual has not been conducted.

E.13.b. Consent for evaluation

Individuals being evaluated are informed in writing that the relationship with the counsellor is for the purposes of an evaluation and not in the nature of counselling. They are also informed of the entities or individuals who will receive the evaluation report. Written consent from those being evaluated must be obtained unless a court orders otherwise. When children or adults who lack the capacity to give voluntary consent are being evaluated, informed written consent is obtained from a parent or guardian.

E.13.c. Client evaluation prohibited

Counsellors shall not evaluate current or former clients receiving counselling services for forensic purposes. Counsellors shall not accept individuals they are evaluating or have evaluated for forensic purposes as clients.

E.13.d. Avoid potentially harmful relationships

Counsellors who provide forensic evaluations shall avoid potentially harmful professional or personal relationships with family members, romantic partners, and close friends of individuals they are evaluating or have evaluated in the past.

Section F: Supervision, training and teaching

Introduction:

Counsellors are responsible to foster meaningful and respectful professional relationships and to maintain appropriate boundaries with supervisees and students. Counsellors shall have theoretical and pedagogical foundations for their work, and aim to be fair, accurate, and honest in their assessments of trainee counsellors.

F.1. Counsellor supervision and client welfare

F.1.a. Client welfare

A primary obligation of counselling supervisors is to monitor the services provided by other counsellors or counsellor trainees. Counselling supervisors monitor client welfare and supervisee clinical performance and professional development. To fulfil these obligations, supervisors meet regularly with supervisees to review case notes, sample clinical work, or make observations on directly supervised individuals. Supervisees have responsibility to understand and follow the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics.

F.1.b. Counsellors credentials

Supervisors shall ensure that clients are aware of the supervisees' qualification, who are providing counselling services to them.

F.1.c. Informed consent and client rights

Supervisors shall make supervisees aware of client rights, including the protection of client privacy and confidentiality in the counselling relationship. Supervisees shall inform clients on the procedures of disclosure of information and inform them of how the supervision process influences the limits of confidentiality. Supervisees shall make clients aware of who will have access to records of the counseling relationship and how these records will be used.

F.2. Counsellor supervisory competence

F.2.a. Supervisor preparation

Prior to offering clinical supervision services, counsellors shall be trained in supervision methods and techniques. Counsellors who offer clinical supervision services regularly pursue continuing education activities, including both counselling and supervision skills.

F.2.b. Multicultural issues/ diversity in supervision

Counselling supervisors shall be aware of the role of multiculturalism/ diversity in the supervisory relationship, and discuss this with the supervisee.

F.3. Supervisory relationship

F.3.a. Relationship boundaries with supervisees

Counselling supervisors shall clearly define and maintain ethical professional, personal, and social relationships with their supervisees. Supervisors shall minimise the non-professional relationships with supervisees.

F.3.b. Sexual relationships

Sexual or romantic interactions or relationships with current supervisees are prohibited.

F.3.c. Sexual harassment

Supervisors shall not condone or subject supervisees to sexual harassment.

F.3.d. Close friends and family

Supervisors shall avoid from accepting close relatives, romantic partners, or friends as supervisees.

F.3.e. Potentially beneficial relationships

Supervisors shall be aware of the authority differences in relationships with supervisees. Should they feel that a non-professional relationship with supervisees is potentially beneficial to that supervisee, they shall take steps identical to those taken by a counsellor in their relationship with clients. Examples of such interactions or relationships include, attending a formal ceremony; conducting hospital visits; providing support during a stressful event; or maintaining mutual membership in a professional association, organization, or community. Supervisors shall openly discuss with supervisees if they intend to form a relationship outside their role as a clinical supervisor and/or administrative supervisor. Prior to engaging in a relationship, they shall discuss and document the rationale for the interaction, potential benefits and lack thereof, as well as consequences towards the supervisee.

F.4. Supervisor responsibilities

F.4.a. Informed consent for supervision

Supervisors shall inform supervisees of the principles and basis of informed consent and the procedures which are to be adhered to in their supervision of supervisees.

F.4.b. Emergencies and absences

Supervisors shall establish and communicate to supervisees procedures for contacting supervisors or, in their absence, alternative on-call supervisors to assist in handling crises.

F.4.c. Standards for supervisees

Supervisors shall make their supervisees aware of professional and ethical standards and legal responsibilities. Post-graduate counsellor supervisors shall encourage those counsellors to adhere to the standards of professional practice.

F.4.d. Termination of supervisory relationship

Supervisors or supervisees have the right to terminate the supervisory relationship with adequate notice by informing the relevant parties. Reasons for considering termination shall be provided to the parties involved. In the event cultural, clinical or professional issues becomes critical to the make-or-break of a supervisory relationship, both parties shall work on solving those differences. If termination cannot be avoided, the supervisor shall provide appropriate referrals to other alternative supervisors.

F.5. Supervision, evaluation, remediation and endorsement in counselling

F.5.a. Evaluation

Supervisors shall document and provide supervisees with ongoing assessment of their performance and evaluation feedback. They shall also schedule periodic formal evaluation sessions throughout the supervisory relationship.

F.5.b. Weaknesses

Through continuous evaluation and assessments, supervisors will become aware of individual weaknesses which may affect their performance. Supervisors shall assist supervisees in securing remedial assistance when needed. They shall recommend dismissal from training programs, applied counselling settings, or professional credentialing processes when those supervisees are unable to demonstrate that they can provide competent professional services. Supervisor shall consult with relevant parties and document their decision to dismiss a supervisee or refer to other parties for assistance. They shall ensure that supervisees are aware of options available to them to address such decisions.

F.5.c. Counselling for supervisees

If supervisees request counselling, the supervisor assists the supervisee in identifying appropriate referrals. Supervisors shall not provide counselling services to supervisees and explain the reasons why services cannot be granted.

F.5.d. Endorsements

Supervisors shall endorse supervisees for certification, licenses, employment or completion of an academic or training program only when they believe that supervisees are qualified for the endorsement. Regardless of qualifications, supervisors shall not endorse supervisees whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement.

F.6. Responsibilities of counsellor educator

F.6.a. Counsellor educator

Counsellor educators who are responsible for developing, implementing, and supervising counsellor educational programs are skilled as teachers and practitioners. They are knowledgeable regarding the ethical, legal, and regulatory aspects of the profession, are skilled in applying that knowledge and are able to make students and supervisees aware of their responsibilities. Counsellor educators shall conduct training programs and counsellor education in an ethical manner and serve as a role model for professional behaviour.

F.6.b. Infusing multicultural issues/diversity

Counsellor educators shall infuse material related to multiculturalism/diversity into all courses and workshops for the development of professional counsellors.

F.6.c. Integration of study and practice

Counsellor educators shall establish education and training programs integrating academic research and supervisory practices.

F.6.d. Teaching ethics

Counsellor educators shall ensure that students and supervisees are aware of the ethical responsibilities and standards of the profession and the ethical responsibilities to the profession. Counsellor educators shall infuse ethical considerations throughout the curriculum.

F.6.e. Ethics on student and instructor relationships

Counsellor educators shall ensure the ethical rights among students are adhered to when leading a work group or providing clinical supervision. Counsellor educators shall also ensure that students and supervisees understand they have an ethical obligation similar to those of a counsellor educator, a trainer and supervisor.

F.6.f. Teaching innovative theories and techniques

When a counsellor educator teaches an innovative counselling technique/procedure, without an empirical foundation, or an established basic theory, they shall explain that those techniques/procedures are "not yet proven" or "in development" and explain to them the risks they may face and the ethical considerations in using those techniques and procedures.

F.6.g. Field placements

Counsellor educators shall develop clear policies regarding appropriate field placement and other clinical experiences in the training program. They shall outline clearly the roles and responsibilities of student or supervisees as well as field supervisors and academic supervisors. They shall also verify that the field supervisor is qualified to supervise and proceed to inform the field supervisor of their professional responsibilities and ethics.

F.6.h. Professional disclosure

Before providing counselling service, trainee counsellors shall clarify their status as students and explain how it can affect the limits of confidentiality. Counsellor educators shall ensure that students and supervisees make known to clients on the field about services provided and their qualifications. Students and supervisees shall obtain the client's consent before using any information in relation to the counselling relationship throughout the process of their training.

F.7. Student welfare

F.7.a. Orientation

Counsellor educators shall recognize that program orientation is a developmental process that continues throughout the educational and clinical training of students. Counsellor educators shall provide the following information on the expectations of the counsellor education program to prospective students.

1. the type and level of skill and knowledge acquisition required for successful completion of the training;
2. program training goals, objectives, and mission, and subject matter to be covered;
3. bases for evaluation;
4. training components that encourage self-growth or self-disclosure as part of the training process;
5. the type of supervision settings and requirements of the sites for required clinical field experiences;
6. student and supervisor evaluation and dismissal policies and procedures;
and
7. up-to-date employment prospects for graduates.

F.8. Student responsibilities

F.8.a. Standard for students

Trainee counsellors shall understand and practice the Board of Counsellors Code of Conduct and adhere to the applicable laws, institutional policies and

rules on the conduct of professional staff in the agency or relevant local setting. Students have similar obligations to the client as prescribed to professional counsellors.

F.8.b. Impairment

Trainee counsellors shall refrain from offering or providing professional counselling services if their physical, mental or emotional impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They should monitor themselves for signs of impairment, seek assistance for their problems, and inform the program supervisor should they become aware of being unable to offer services effectively. They should acquire appropriate professional services to overcome the problems that hinder them from providing services to others.

F.9. Evaluation and remediation of students

F.9.a. Evaluation

Counsellor educators shall state clearly to students prior to and throughout the training program, the level of competency expected, evaluation methods and evaluation table for didactic and clinic competency. They shall also provide students with ongoing feedback regarding their performance throughout the training program.

F.9.b. Limitations

Counsellor educators, through ongoing evaluation and assessment, are aware of the inability of some students to achieve counselling competencies that may hinder their performance. They should then deal with them by:

1. assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed;
2. seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and
3. ensure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions requiring them to seek assistance or to dismiss them. Students shall be

provided with sufficient opportunities according to institutional policies and procedures.

F.9.c. Counselling for students

If students request counselling, or if counselling services are required as part of a remediation process, counsellor educators shall provide appropriate referrals.

F.10. Roles and relationships between counsellor educators and students

F.10.a. Sexual and romantic relationships

Sexual interaction/relationships with current students are prohibited.

F.10.b. Sexual harassment

Counsellor educators shall not condone or subject students to sexual harassment.

F.10.c. Relationship with former students

Counsellor educators are aware of the power differential in the relationship between faculty and students. They shall discuss with former students openly when they consider engaging in social, or other intimate relationships. They shall discuss how their former relationship (as counsellor educator and student) may affect their new relationship.

F.10.d. Non-professional relationships

Counsellor educators shall avoid non-professional relationships or ongoing professional relationships with students in which there is a risk of potential harm to the student or which may compromise the training experience or grades assigned. In addition, counsellor educators shall not accept any form of professional services, fees, commissions, reimbursement, or remuneration from a site for student or supervisor placement.

F.10.e. Counselling services

Counsellor educators shall not serve as counsellors to current students unless it is a brief role related to training experience.

F.10.f. Relationship with potential benefits

Counsellor educators are aware of the power differential, status and position in the relationship between faculty and students. If they believe that a non-professional relationship with a student may be potentially beneficial to the student, they shall take precautions similar to those taken by counsellors when providing counselling services to clients. Examples of potentially beneficial interactions or relationships include, (but are not limited to) attending a formal ceremony; conducting hospital visits; providing support during a stressful event; or maintaining mutual membership in a professional association, organization, or community. Counsellor educators shall discuss openly with students should they intend to form a relationship outside their role as a teacher or supervisor. Counsellor educators shall discuss with students the rationale for such interactions, the potential benefits and drawbacks, and the anticipated consequences for the student. Educators clarify the specific nature and limitations of the additional role(s) they will have with the student prior to engaging in a non-professional relationship. Non-professional relationships with students should be limited at an appropriate time and initiated with student consent.

F.11. Multicultural/diversity competence in counsellor education and training program

F.11.a. Lecturer diversity

Counsellor educators shall be committed to recruiting and retaining lecturers from different cultures and competencies.

F.11.b. Student diversity

Counsellor educators shall actively attempt to recruit and retain groups of students from different cultures and competencies. Counsellor educators demonstrate commitment to multicultural/diversity competence by recognizing and valuing the diverse cultures and types of abilities that students bring to the training experience. Counsellor educators shall provide appropriate accommodations that enhance and support diverse student well-being and academic performance.

F.11.c. Multicultural/diversity competence

Counsellor educators actively infuse multicultural/diversity competency in their training and supervision practices. They shall actively train students to gain awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice. Counsellor educators shall include case examples, role play, questions discussions and other classroom activities that can instil and represent diverse cultural perspectives.

Section G: Research and publication

Introduction

Counsellors who conduct research are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession and promote a clearer understanding of the conditions that lead to a healthy and more just society. Counsellors shall support the efforts of researchers by participating fully and willingly whenever possible. Counsellors shall minimize bias and respect diversity in designing and implementing research.

G.1. Research responsibilities

G.1.a. Human involvement as research participants

Counsellor shall plan, design, conduct and report research consistently with ethical principles, state and federal law, institutional regulations where the research is conducted, and scientific standards with human involvement as research participants.

G.1.b. Deviation from standard practice

Counsellors shall seek consultation and observe stringent safeguards to protect the rights of research participants when research deviates from standard or acceptable practices.

G.1.c. Precautions to avoid harm

Counsellors who involve humans as research participants shall be responsible for their participants' welfare throughout the research process and should take reasonable precautions to avoid causing psychological, emotional, physical, or social harm to participants.

G.1.d. Principal researcher responsibility

The ultimate responsibility for ethical research practice lies with the principal researcher. However, all other researchers involved in the research activities share ethical obligations and responsibility for their own actions.

G.1.e. Minimal interference

Counsellor shall take appropriate steps to avoid interference in the life of participants involved in the research.

G.1.f. Multicultural/diversity considerations in research

Where appropriate with research purposes, counsellor shall include research procedures which takes into account cultural aspects. If necessary, they should seek consultation.

G.2. Rights of research participants

G.2.a. Informed consent in research

Individuals have the right to agree to become research participants. In seeking consent, counsellors shall use language that:

1. accurately explains the purpose and procedures to be followed;
2. identifies any procedures that are experimental or relatively untried;
3. describes any discomforts and risks involved;
4. describes any benefits or changes in individuals or organizations that might be expected;
5. discloses appropriate alternative procedures that would be advantageous for participants;
6. ready to answer any inquiries concerning the procedures;
7. explain any limitations on confidentiality;
8. explain the publication format and potential target audiences for the dissemination of research findings;
9. inform participants that they are free to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time, without penalty.

G.2.b. Deception

Counsellor shall not conduct research involving deception unless an alternative procedure cannot be conducted and the prospective value of the research justifies it. Should the deception cause potential physical or emotional harm to the participant, the research shall not be conducted despite having prospective value. Should the research method require concealment or deception, the researcher shall clarify as soon as possible during the debriefing on reasons why such actions were taken.

G.2.c. Student/supervisee participation

Researchers who involve students or supervisees in research shall make clear to them that the decision regarding participation in research activities does not affect their academic standing or supervisory relationship. Students or supervisees who choose not to participate in research are provided with an appropriate alternative to fulfil their academic or clinical requirements.

G.2.d. Client participation

Counsellors conducting research involving clients make clear in the informed consent process that clients are free to choose whether to participate in research activities. Counsellors take necessary precautions to protect clients from adverse consequences of declining or withdrawing from participation.

G.2.e. Confidentiality of information

Information obtained about research participants during the course of research is confidential. If there is a possibility where others have access to such information, research ethics practice requires that possibility of access and plans to protect the confidentiality to be explained to the participants as part of the procedure to obtain informed consent.

G.2.f. Persons not capable of giving informed consent

When a research participant is not capable of giving informed consent, counsellors shall provide an appropriate explanation to, obtain agreement for participation from, and obtain the appropriate consent of a legally authorized person.

G.2.g. Commitments to participants

Counsellors shall honour all commitments to research participants.

G.2.h. Explanation after data collection

After data are collected, counsellors shall provide participants with full clarification of the nature of the study to remove any misconceptions participants might have regarding the research. Where scientific or human values justify delaying or withholding information, counsellors shall take reasonable measures to avoid causing harm.

G.2.i. Informing sponsors

Counsellors inform sponsors, institutions, and publication channels regarding research procedures and outcomes. Counsellors ensure that appropriate bodies and authorities are given pertinent information and acknowledgement.

G.2.j. Disposal of research documents and records

Within reasonable time after a project or research study has been concluded, counsellor shall take steps to destroy records or documents (audio, video, digital, written materials) containing data or private information which may make a research participant identifiable. If the record is artistic in nature, researcher shall obtain the participants agreement on how to handle those records and documents.

G.3. Relationships with research participants (in the event of research involving intensive or prolonged interaction)

G.3.a. Non-professional relationship

Non-professional relationship with research participants shall be avoided.

G.3.b. Relationships with research participants

Sexual or romantic interactions/relationships between counsellor and current research participants are prohibited.

G.3.c. Sexual harassment and research participants

Researchers shall not condone or subject research participants to sexual harassment.

G.3.d. Potentially beneficial interaction

If non-professional interaction between researcher and research participants is potentially beneficial, researcher shall document, prior to engaging in interaction (where possible), the rationale for such interaction, potential benefit and expected consequence to the research participant. Such interaction shall be initiated with appropriate consent from the research participant. When a research participant is unintentionally harmed by the non-professional interaction, researcher shall show evidence of efforts that have been made to remedy such harm.

G.4. Reporting results

G.4.a. Reports of accurate research findings

Counsellors shall plan, conduct, and report research findings accurately. They allow room for extensive discussions on the limitations of data and alternative hypothesis. Counsellors shall not engage in misleading or fraudulent research, distort data, misrepresent data, or deliberately bias their results. They explicitly state all variables and conditions known to the researcher which may affect research results or interpretation of data. They shall also clarify the extent to which the results can be used for diverse populations.

G.4.b. Obligation to report unfavourable results

Counsellors shall report the results of any research of professional value. Results that reflect unfavourably on institutions, programs, services, prevailing opinions, or personal interests shall not be withheld.

G.4.c. Reporting errors

If counsellors discover significant errors in their published research, they shall take reasonable steps to correct such errors in a correction erratum or through other appropriate publication means.

G.4.d. Identity of participants

Counsellors who supply data, aid in the research of another person, report research results, or make original data available shall take due care to disguise the identity of respective participants in the absence of specific authorization from the participants to do otherwise. In situations where participants self identify their involvement in research studies, researchers take active steps to ensure that data are adapted/changed to protect the identity and welfare of all parties and that discussion of results does not cause harm to participants.

G.4.e. Replication studies

Counsellors are obligated to make available sufficient original research data to qualified professionals who may wish to replicate the study.

G.5. Publication

G.5.a. Acknowledging contributions

In conducting and reporting research, counsellors shall give recognition to previous research work on the topic researched, uphold copyright laws, and give full recognition to those who deserve to be recognised.

G.5.b. Plagiarism

Counsellors shall not plagiarize; that is, they do not present another person's work as their own.

G.5.c. Review/republication of data or ideas

If the ideas or data are sent for review and republication, counsellor shall give full recognition and ensure the editorial board is aware of it.

G.5.d. Contributors

Counsellors give credit through joint authorship, acknowledgement, footnote statements, or other appropriate means to those who have contributed significantly to research or concept development in accordance with such contributions. The principal contributor is listed first, and minor technical or professional contributions are acknowledged in notes or introductory statements.

G.5.e. Agreement of contributors

Counsellors who conduct joint research with colleagues or students/supervisees shall establish agreements in advance regarding allocation of tasks, publication credit, and types of acknowledgement that will be received.

G.5.f. Student research

For articles that are substantially based on a student's course papers, projects, dissertations, or theses where the student is the main contributor, they shall be listed as lead author.

G.5.g. Manuscript publication

Counsellor shall submit manuscripts for consideration of publication only to one journal at a time. Manuscripts that are published in whole or in substantial part in one journal or published work shall not be submitted for publication to another publisher without acknowledgement and permission from the original publisher.

G.5.h. Professional review

Counsellors who review material submitted for publication, research, or other scholarly purposes shall respect the confidentiality and proprietary rights of the author. Counsellors shall be careful in making publication decisions based on valid and defensible standards. Counsellors shall review article submissions in a timely manner and based on their scope and competency in research methodologies. Counsellors who serve as reviewers at the request of editors or publishers shall make every effort to only review materials that are within their scope of competency and avoid personal biases.

Section H: Solving ethical issues

Introduction

Professional counsellors shall act according to the law, ethics and moral values in conducting their professional duties. They are aware that client protection and trust depend on a high level of professional conduct. They hold other counsellors to the same standards and are willing to take appropriate action to ensure that standards are upheld.

Counsellors shall strive to resolve ethical dilemmas with direct and open communication among all parties involved and seek consultation with colleagues and supervisors when necessary. Counsellors incorporate ethical practice into their daily professional work. They shall engage in ongoing professional development regarding current topics in ethical and legal issues in counselling.

H.1. Standards and law

H.1.a. Knowledge

Counsellors shall know and understand the Board of Counsellor Code of Ethics and other applicable ethics codes from professional organizations of which they are members. Lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of an ethical responsibility is not a defence against a charge of unethical conduct.

H.1.b. Conflict between ethics and laws

If ethical responsibilities conflict with the law, regulations, or other governing legal authority, counsellors make known their commitment to the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics and take steps to resolve the conflict. If the conflict cannot be resolved using this approach, counsellors may adhere to the requirements of the law, regulations, or other governing legal authority.

H.2. Suspected violations

H.2.a. Expected ethical behaviour

Counsellors expect colleagues to comply with the Board of Counsellor Code of Ethics. Counsellor shall take appropriate action if the counsellor has knowledge that arise suspicions of other counsellors acting ethically or otherwise.

H.2.b. Informal Resolution

When counsellors have reason to believe that another counsellor is violating or has violated an ethical standard and substantial harm has not occurred, they shall attempt to first resolve the issue informally with the other counsellor if feasible, provided such action does not violate confidentiality rights that may be involved.

H.2.c. Reporting ethical violations

If an apparent violation has substantially harmed or is likely to substantially harm a person or organization and is not appropriate for informal resolution or is not resolved properly, counsellors shall take further action depending on the situation. Such action may include referral to the Board of Counsellors, professional associations, or appropriate institutional authorities. This action does not apply when an intervention violates client's right to confidentiality, or if counsellor is required to review the work of another counsellor who violated the ethics code.

H.2.d. Consultation

When uncertain about whether a particular situation or course of action may be in violation of the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics, counsellors shall consult with other counsellors who are knowledgeable about ethics and the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics, with colleagues, or with appropriate authorities.

H.2.e. Organisational conflict

If the demands of an organization with which counsellors are affiliated pose a conflict with the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics, counsellors shall specify the nature of such conflicts and express to their supervisors or other responsible officials their commitment to the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics. When possible, counsellor shall work to make changes in the organization to allow full compliance to the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics. In making those changes, counsellor shall pay attention to any confidentiality issues.

H.2.f. Unwarranted complaints

Counsellors cannot initiate, participate in, or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are reckless in nature or wilful ignorance of facts that would disprove the allegation.

H.2.g. Unfair discrimination against respondents and complainants

Counsellors cannot deny individuals employment, advancement, admission to academic or other programs, tenure, or promotion based solely on their having made or their being the subject of an ethics complaint. This does not preclude taking action based on the outcome of such proceedings or considering other appropriate information.

H.3. Cooperation with ethics committee

Counsellors shall assist in the process of enforcing the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics. Counsellors shall cooperate with investigations, proceedings, and requirements of the Board of Counsellors Ethics Committee or ethics committees of other duly constituted associations or boards having jurisdiction over those charged with a violation. Counsellor shall have in-depth knowledge of the basis and procedures of violation of ethics, and use it as a reference to assist in enforcing the Board of Counsellors Code of Ethics.