



## **THE WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.**

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17.A  
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### **INTERNATIONAL CODE**

of

### **MEDICAL ETHICS**

Adopted by the 3rd General Assembly of the  
World Medical Association, London, England, October 1949

and amended by the 22nd World Medical Assembly  
Sydney, Australia, August 1968

and the 35th World Medical Assembly  
Venice, Italy, October 1983

### **DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS IN GENERAL**

A PHYSICIAN SHALL always maintain the highest standards of professional conduct.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL not permit motives of profit to influence the free and independent exercise of professional judgement on behalf of patients.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL, in all types of medical practice, be dedicated to providing competent medical service in full technical and moral independence, with compassion and respect for human dignity.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL deal honestly with patients and colleagues, and strive to expose those physicians deficient in character or competence, or who engage in fraud or deception.

The following practices are deemed to be unethical conduct:

- a) Self advertising by physicians, unless permitted by the laws of the country and the Code of Ethics of the National Medical Association.

- b) Paying or receiving any fee or any other consideration solely to procure the referral of a patient or for prescribing or referring a patient to any source.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL respect the rights of patients, of colleagues, and of other health professionals and shall safeguard patient confidences.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL act only in the patient's interest when providing medical care which might have the effect of weakening the physical and mental condition of the patient.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL use great caution in divulging discoveries or new techniques or treatment through non-professional channels.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL certify only that which he has personally verified.

#### DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS TO THE SICK

A PHYSICIAN SHALL always bear in mind the obligation of preserving human life.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL owe his patients complete loyalty and all the resources of his science. Whenever an examination or treatment is beyond the physician's capacity he should summon another physician who has the necessary ability.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL preserve absolute confidentiality on all he knows about his patient even after the patient has died.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL give emergency care as a humanitarian duty unless he is assured that others are willing and able to give such care.

#### DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS TO EACH OTHER

A PHYSICIAN SHALL behave towards his colleagues as he would have them behave towards him.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL NOT entice patients from his colleagues.

A PHYSICIAN SHALL observe the principles of the "Declaration of Geneva" approved by the World Medical Association.

DECLARATION OF GENEVA

Adopted by the 2nd General Assembly of the  
World Medical Association, Geneva, Switzerland, September 1948

and amended by the 22nd World Medical Assembly  
Sydney, Australia, August 1968

and the 35th World Medical Assembly,  
Venice, Italy, October 1983

and the 46th WMA General Assembly,  
Stockholm, Sweden, September 1994

AT THE TIME OF BEING ADMITTED AS A MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL  
PROFESSION:

I SOLEMNLY PLEDGE myself to consecrate my life to the service of humanity;

I WILL GIVE to my teachers the respect and gratitude which is their due;

I WILL PRACTICE my profession with conscience and dignity;

THE HEALTH OF MY PATIENT will be my first consideration;

I WILL RESPECT the secrets which are confided in me, even after the patient  
has died;

I WILL MAINTAIN by all the means in my power, the honor and the noble  
traditions of the medical profession;

MY COLLEAGUES will be my sisters and brothers;

I WILL NOT PERMIT considerations of age, disease or disability, creed, ethnic  
origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, or social  
standing to intervene between my duty and my patient;

I WILL MAINTAIN the utmost respect for human life from its beginning even  
under threat and I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of  
humanity;

I MAKE THESE PROMISES solemnly, freely and upon my honor.

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