
TITLE: Professional Behaviour Policy

VERSION DATE: January 2017

POLICY STATEMENT:

Throughout history, society has expected, and health professionals have held sacred, a standard of behaviour and ethical values of the highest order. Traditionally, the Oath of Hippocrates and the Florence Nightingale Pledge have represented two such codes of behaviour. By practicing in a health discipline at Benalla Health (BH) the health professional accepts that the hospital demands integrity, exemplary behaviour and dedication to the service to humanity. Concurrently all health professionals will adhere to the standards of ethical behaviour inclusive of honesty, integrity, conscientiousness and reliability. Behaviour inconsistent with being a health professional and an employee/appointee of BH will be discussed with the employee and may result in the disciplinary process being actioned.

PRINCIPLES:

Guidelines for Behavioural and Ethical Performance

1. The health professional will display appropriate interpersonal skills when he/she is communicating and interacting with patients, residents, families and health care personnel.
2. The health professional will demonstrate:
 - 2.1. empathy and compassion for patients, residents and their families;
 - 2.2. concern for the needs of the patients, residents and their families in order to understand the nature of the illness and the goals and possible complications of investigations and treatment;
 - 2.3. concern for the psycho-social aspects of the patient's illness;
 - 2.4. respect for, and an ability to work harmoniously with doctors, nurses and allied health care personnel;
 - 2.5. recognition of the importance of self-assessment and of continuing professional development and a willingness to teach others;
 - 2.6. understanding of the appropriate requirements for involvement of patients and their families in research;
 - 2.7. an awareness of the effects that differences in gender, cultural and social background may have on the maintenance of health and the development and treatment of illness.
3. A breach of any of the above principles of behaviour may, after appropriate discussion with the health professional, be cause for dismissal or failure to gain re-appointment.
4. Behaviour unacceptable to BH may include:
 - 4.1. referring to oneself as, or holding oneself to be, more qualified than one is;
 - 4.2. theft of drugs or equipment;
 - 4.3. violation of the criminal code;
 - 4.4. failure to be available while on call;
 - 4.5. failure to respect patients' and residents' rights;

- 4.6. breach of confidentiality;
- 4.7. failure to provide transfer of responsibility for patient care;
- 4.8. failure to keep proper medical records;
- 4.9. falsification of medical records;
- 4.10. sexual impropriety with a patient or resident;
- 4.11. being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in patient or resident care or on call;
- 4.12. and any other conduct unbecoming of a practicing health professional.
5. These standards do not replace legal or ethical standards defined by professional bodies.
6. Action for breach of these standards does not preclude action by professional bodies or action that may be instigated under the Criminal Code.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Health professionals will adhere to the standards of ethical behaviour inclusive of honesty, integrity, conscientiousness and reliability.
2. Behaviour inconsistent with being a health professional and an employee/appointee of BH will be discussed with the employee and may result in the disciplinary process being actioned.

REFERENCES:

1. Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency – see links below

<http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Policies.aspx>

<http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Professional-standards.aspx>

<http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

<http://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

<http://www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

<http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

<http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

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