



## **CODE OF CONDUCT of the ORAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA**

### **NOTE:**

By becoming a member of OHASA (hereinafter referred to as "the Association") a member agrees and binds himself to adhere to and to act in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Association, Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics and recognise that disciplinary measures can be taken against him if he does not adhere to / act in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, as amended from time to time.

The provisions of the Constitution, Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics may be amended from time to time. The amendments will be adopted and made effective according to the necessary procedures prescribed in the Constitution.

The Code of Conduct is a written document containing the rules, principles, values and member expectations regarding behaviours and relationships that the Association considers important and fundamental to the Association's success.

The Code of Conduct will in certain respects overlap with the Code of Ethics. A member must therefore read the two documents in conjunction with each other as they function together and form an integral part of one another.

In the event of a conflict between the provisions of the Code of Conduct, the Code of Ethics and the Constitution of the Association, the provisions of the Constitution will prevail.

### **1. PREAMBLE**

As part of the Oral Health Profession, Oral Hygienists play a vital role in society's healthcare education and practise/service. This is a privilege that must be treated with respect as you hold the public's trust in your hands when providing these services. This also extends to interactions with fellow colleagues and other Oral Health Professionals. Our actions, behaviours and attitudes are consistent with our commitment to public services that adhere to high ethical standards of conduct. We endorse and incorporate this Code of Conduct (herein after referred to as "the Code") into our daily lives. The Code is binding on all members of the Association and any violations of the provisions of the Code (as with the Code of Ethics) may result in disciplinary measures being taken against a member.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Code is to provide a framework for ethical conduct and decision making within the Association. The standards set out in the Code are standards of behaviour expected of every member of the Association. The Code also serves as a communication instrument that informs internal and external stakeholders about what the Association's members value, believe and stand for. The Code portrays how members, partners and all fellow stakeholders can expect to be treated.

Specific objectives of the Code are to ensure the members of the Association use their best endeavours:

- 2.1 To treat all without discrimination.
- 2.2 To conduct themselves in the utmost professional manner by providing professional knowledge, skill and judgment.
- 2.3 To refrain from criticising fellow professionals within the oral health profession.
- 2.4 To comply with all the laws of South Africa.
- 2.5 To refrain from sharing any confidential information pertaining to the Association and or affiliates.
- 2.6 To request permission from the Association prior to any written or verbal public statement by a member that will affect the Association in anyway or the Associations public image.
- 2.7 To conduct themselves in their personal and professional life in a manner consistent with the high reputation of the Association and in accordance with such code of behaviour as might reasonably be expected from a professional person.

## **3. GENERAL**

- 3.1 Members are bound by and will act in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Association's governing documentation, policies and procedures, including the Constitution, Code of Ethics and this Code of Conduct. Members are expected to have thorough knowledge of the Constitution.
- 3.2 Members will support the mission, standards, objectives, values and principles of the Association promoting same using one's skills, knowledge and abilities and seeking expert advice where necessary and appropriate.
- 3.3 Members will display the highest degree of good faith towards the other members of the Association and the Association in all matters relating to the Association.
- 3.4 Members will use their best endeavours to promote the interests of the Association;
- 3.5 Members will respect the Association's and fellow members' individual confidentiality, and refrain from disclosing any confidential details concerning the Association or the members, save with the prior consent of the Association or as may be necessary for the conduct of the activities and objectives of the Association.
- 3.6 Members will, as far as reasonably possible and consistent with this Code of Conduct, adhere to any code of conduct, rules and/or policies which the International Federation of Dental Hygienists, may prescribe and/or promulgate, from time to time.

#### **4. COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Certain members will make themselves available to be elected to serve as members of the Committee. The Committee members:

- 4.1 Will develop and maintain a sound and up to date knowledge of the Association, its environment and organisational structure. This will include but is not limited to how the Association operates, the social and economic environment in which the Association operates and the nature and extent of its operations.
- 4.2 Will use the Associations resources responsibly and in the best interests of the Association and when claiming expenses will do so ethically and transparently in line with all the associations procedures and written and unwritten ethics.
- 4.3 Will be accountable for their actions as Committee members and will submit to appropriate scrutiny.
- 4.4 Will be responsible to ensure that the Association is managed in an ethical manner and will raise issues and questions in an appropriate and sensitive manner.
- 4.5 Will not gain materially or financially from their involvement with the Association unless specifically authorised in accordance with the Associations Constitution to do so.
- 4.6 Will act in the best interest of the Association as a whole and as not of a representative of any group, taking into account the interests of the Association and its present and future members while ensuring not to bring the Association into disrepute.
- 4.7 Will unless authorised, not put themselves in a position where their personal interests' conflict with the duty to act in the interests of the Association. Where a conflict of interest exists, the member will ensure that this is managed effectively and ethically in line with the Associations Constitution.
- 4.8 Understand that a failure to declare a conflict of interest may be considered as a breach of this Code.
- 4.9 Will not receive remuneration for any services, time and/or effort put into any activities or business of the Association, including but not limited to serving as a committee member.

#### **5. ASSOCIATION MEETINGS AND OR CONFERENCES/SEMINARS**

- 5.1 Members will attend all appropriate meetings and/or seminars/conferences in line with the Constitution or give an appropriate apology. If a member cannot attend conferences/seminars a member will consider whether there are other ways in which they can engage with the association.
- 5.2 Members will prepare thoroughly for all meetings of the Association.
- 5.3 Members agree to actively engage in discussion, debate and voting where appropriate in meetings and seminars/conferences, contributing in a considerate and constructive way, challenging sensitively and avoiding conflict.

#### **6. RELATIONSHIPS WITH FELLOW MEMBERS, COLLEAGUES AND THE PUBLIC**

- 6.1 Members will endeavour to treat each other, the public and fellow professionals with respect and consideration. Members will respect diversity, different roles and boundaries.
- 6.2 Members will recognise that the roles within the Association are different and will actively seek to understand and respect these differences.

- 6.3 Members will seek to support and encourage one another. In particular Members will recognise their responsibility to support the Committees and Executive Committee.
- 6.4 Members will refrain from all social media, cyber or public comments that will bring themselves, the association, the profession or any other member of the Association into disrepute. Any comments made by a member in this regard will be considered in line with the laws of South Africa, the Association's Constitution, procedures and Codes and any violations may result in disciplinary measures.
- 6.5 The Association prohibits discrimination, harassment and any form of bullying and thereby expects all members to refrain from any action or inaction which could be viewed or interpreted by the public or any person or group of persons as discrimination, harassment or bullying.

## **7. RESIGNATION/REMOVAL OF MEMBERS**

- 7.1 Members agree that any substantial breach of the law of South Africa, the Association's Constitution, procedures and Codes may result in procedures being implemented that may result in the member being asked to terminate its membership of the Association.
- 7.2 In the event of being asked to leave the Association, the member will accept the majority decision of the Executive Committee in this matter.
- 7.3 A member of a Committee who wishes to resign as a member of the said Committee must give the Executive Committee members at least one month's written notice of his/her resignation.

## **8. CONFIDENTIALITY, RESOURCES AND INFORMATION**

The Association provides an abundance of information and resources to its members because they pay membership fees to gain access to this. Members are prohibited from distributing resources and information that is subject to copy rights and only provided to Association members.

Members must act in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 and all privacy and data regulations. A copy of the said Act will be made available to a member requesting same in writing.

Members will respect the Association's and fellow members' individual confidentiality, and refrain from disclosing any confidential details concerning the Association or the members, save with the prior consent of the Association or as may be necessary for the conduct of the activities and objectives of the Association;

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The Association relies on a member's good judgment to uphold a high standard of ethical behaviour. The Association expects all members to be guided by both the letter and spirit of not only this Code of Conduct but also the Association's Code of Ethics and the Association's Constitution.