

## code of conduct background

This Code of Conduct has been developed for Massage Australia members and is relevant to all massage practitioners in all practice settings.

It is Massage Australia's expectation that all members adhere to and act in accordance with the expectations of the organisation. This is achieved by members following the 'Code of Conduct' set out by the organisation. All members when signing the Massage Australia Application Form (refers to Professional & Professional Plus members) are agreeing to maintain knowledge and competency in all areas of policy and other requirements set out by Massage Australia, at all times.

Massage Australia has chosen to create a 'Code of Conduct', as an alternative to a 'Code of Ethics'. We prefer this concept, as a number of traditional Codes of Ethics are based on points governed by law and are outside the responsibility of the organisation. In saying that, we certainly encourage good practices from all our members and expect legal and ethical responsibilities to be met at all times.

## introduction

Massage Australia has always honoured itself on seeking the highest standards in all areas of operations. The organisation has always anticipated that members would conduct themselves in an appropriate manner as a common practice.

We acknowledge that the vast majority of massage practitioners conduct themselves in a competent, honest, ethical and accountable manner.

The impetus for the review of the Code of Conduct in 2007 came about when it was identified that version one of the Code lacked a clear focus on the ethical and moral expectation that Massage Australia held for its members. The task of version two, Code of Conduct, is to formally detail our moral and ethical standing and allow an avenue for members to reflect and evaluate themselves in accordance with the expectations of the organisation.

## objectives of a code of conduct

The objective of the Massage Australia Code of Conduct is to provide our practitioners with a basis for professional and self-reflection, and evaluation on ethical conduct. This document defines and identifies acceptable behavior, promotes high standards of practice, and establishes a framework for professional behavior and responsibilities.

Massage Australia is a professional organisation, which has an obligation to our members, the general public and the industry as a whole.

## professional conduct

### THE PUBLIC INTEREST

- Members shall ensure that within their chosen fields they have appropriate knowledge and understanding of relevant legislation, State, Territory & Local Council laws and regulations and, that they comply with such requirements.
- Members shall in their professional practice have regard to basic human rights, compassion and respect for others and shall avoid any actions that adversely affect such rights.
- The practitioner shall not discriminate on the basis of race, age, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, political views, medical condition, and socioeconomic status, culture, and disability.
- Members must at all times comply with the Code of Ethics and for those member that are Accredited members (Health Fund Registered), comply with the Standards of Practice of Massage Australia.

## DUTY OF CLIENT/PATIENT CARE

- Members shall practice within the boundaries of their qualification/s and shall not cause harm to clients/patient of physical or emotional injury.
- Members shall carry out treatment with due care and diligence in accordance with the requirements of the client/patient. Practice according to the client/patient informed consent.
- Where client/patient are unable to give informed consent, due to medical condition, psychological state of mind, due to age etc. consent must be obtained from legal guardian.
- When treating minors (under 16 years of age) the client/patient must be accompanied for treatment by a parent or guardian and have permission for any treatment.
- Uphold client/patient confidentiality. The practitioner shall ensure that there will be no wrongful disclosure, either directly or indirectly, of a patient's personal information.
- Members must maintain accurate clinical records in a secured environment, for the duration necessary to meet law requirements.
- Members must recognise their professional limitations and be prepared to refer a client/ patient to other health service practitioners, as appropriate.

## PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARY

- The member will not engage in contact or gestures of a sexual nature to a client/patient.
- Any approaches of a sexual nature by a patient must be declined and a note made in the client's/patient's record.
- Members shall not engage in services that are sexual in nature with the client/patient.

## DUTY TO THE PROFESSION

- Members shall uphold the reputation of the profession and shall seek to improve professional standards through participation in personal development and will avoid any action, which will adversely affect the good standing of Massage Australia.
- Members shall seek to advance public knowledge and to counter false or misleading statements, which are detrimental to the profession.
- Members shall act with integrity toward fellow practitioners and to members of other professions with whom they are concerned in a professional capacity.

## PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY

- Members shall maintain professional skills to represent themselves at a professional standard, seeking to continue or maintain personal and professional development skills.
- Members shall accept professional responsibility for their work.
- Members shall not lay claim to any level of competence, which they do not possess or provide services, which are not within their professional competence.
- Under no circumstances may a member use another practitioners' membership number or provider number on a tax invoice receipt for purposes of issuing a health fund rebate or, use another practitioners' provider details for electronic claiming (HICAPS or iSOFT Terminals). Each member has the responsibility of protecting their provider details and not allow others to use this information.
- The member shall not provide false, misleading or incorrect information regarding health fund registration to Massage Australia. The control of a member's health fund registration including clinic location (s), requesting an additional clinic location and the closing of clinic locations, is the responsibility of the member.

## DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- This code sets out certain basic principles that are intended to help members maintain the highest standards of professional conduct. All members must accept professional, legal and ethical responsibilities in order to protect themselves and the public's interest.
- Should a case arise where a member is in breach of the code of conduct Message Australia has the right to cancel a practitioner's membership.
- Disciplinary and grievances procedures are outlined further in the Message Australia 'Disciplinary Policy'. Please refer to this document for further information relation to disciplinary procedures and right of appeals against membership suspension.