

CODE OF ETHICS FOR SAP MEMBERS AND TRAINEES

(Revised October 2013)

The provisions of this Code constitute Bye Laws of the Society for the purposes of Article 10 of the Society's Articles of Association. In the Code of Ethics the term "Member" includes Professional Members, Members, Honorary Members, Retired Members, Overseas Members, and Trainees of the Society.

Members are expected to act with honesty and integrity in all their professional work and have a responsibility to be familiar with, and abide by this Code of Ethics. It is expected that members of the society will follow the rules contained in this code, not only in relation to their private and clinic patients but also in their relationships to other members and trainees, colleagues in other professional bodies, guests of the society, visitors to its meetings, applicants for training and supervisees.

This Code of Ethics sets out the essential ethical imperative and a breach of any of this code may constitute grave misconduct, which will be treated with the utmost seriousness and dealt with accordingly.

1.1 Members must at all times act in a way that they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of their patients. At all times the welfare of the patient must be paramount and every care taken to ensure that the patient is not exploited in any way.

1.2 Members must take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information acquired through their practice and protect the privacy of individuals and organisations about which information is held.

1.3 Members must conduct themselves and their professional activities in such a way that does not damage the interests of their patients or participants in their training.

1.4 If a member is convicted of a criminal offence in any court in the UK, or elsewhere, or has any proceedings commenced against him, civil or criminal, or has proceedings commenced against him by any professional body, he must inform the Chair of the Ethics Committee of the SAP. Similarly, Members have a duty to inform the Chair of the SAP Ethics Committee of such information pertaining to a fellow registrant.

1.5 Members may not resign from the SAP (or from their constituent institution) while they are under investigation for an ethical complaint. Any such resignation will not be accepted by the BPC and the constituent institution. A registrant under investigation must undertake not to impede the process of investigation

1.6 Members have a duty to maintain a satisfactory standard of professional competence by meeting the appropriate requirements for CPD and undertaking any necessary further education or training.

1.7 Members must restrict their practice within the limits of their own competence and seek professional consultation or supervision in any situation which may reach this limit. As a matter of good practice, Members should exercise clinical judgment in considering whether to seek a medical opinion about a patient.

1.8 Members must, at the beginning of treatment, make clear to the patient, or whoever holds legal parental responsibility for a child in treatment, the principles and practicalities of the treatment offered and assure that as far as possible they are maintained.

1.9 Members shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that those working under their direct supervision adhere to this code and do not attempt to practice beyond their competence.

1.10 Members must convey the Terms and Conditions of practice at the outset of therapy, so that the patient or whoever has legal parental responsibility for a child can understand the nature of the treatment and agree to it.

1.11 Members should be familiar with the Access to Health Records Act of 1991 and the Data Protection Act and their implications for practicing psychotherapists. Members must refer to the BPC guidelines on Notes and Records if requests for access to notes or records occur.

1.12 Members must limit their work, or refrain from practice when their physical or psychological health is seriously impaired or if in doubt about their ability to perform competently must seek appropriate advice.

1.13 Members must carry out their duties in a professional and ethical way and maintain appropriate and professional boundaries with patients at all times, so that they are not exploited in any way.

1.14 Members shall, in all their professional work value integrity, impartiality and respect for patients and seek to establish the highest ethical and clinical standards in their work.

1.15 If advertising, Members shall confine such advertising to a statement of name, relevant qualifications, address, telephone number and a brief statement of the service offered. Such statements must be descriptive and not evaluative.

1.16 Members must conduct themselves in such a manner as not to bring the profession, colleagues or themselves into disrepute, and must maintain fitting levels of respect and courtesy with colleagues and members of their own and other professions and with their employer if employed and also with the public.

1.17 If publishing or presenting clinical or supervisory material either orally, written or film/video form, Members must make every effort to ensure the anonymity of patients and where clinically appropriate seek the patient's permission. If doing research, the nature, purpose and conditions of any research involving clinical material must be fully explained to the patient and informed consent must be obtained.

1.18 Members who take part in any media or other public event must exercise caution, particularly with regard to confidentiality.

1.19 All Members must be covered by professional indemnity insurance.

1.20 Members must nominate two colleagues to hold a list of their patients and supervisees in confidence, in the event of death or an inability to work. The names of these nominees must be lodged with the constituent societies.