

The Australian Physiotherapy Association Code of Conduct



AUSTRALIAN
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Physiotherapy Association

The Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) is the peak national member organisation for physiotherapists in Australia. The APA brings together physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and physiotherapy assistants for the advancement of the profession and for consumers.

The purpose of the APA code of conduct

The APA code of conduct sets out the ethical foundations and professional obligations for APA members. The APA code acknowledges the moral responsibility of physiotherapists to clients, families, colleagues and communities they work with and the healthcare system they work within.

Guidance and support material

The code's guidance and support materials are a growing resource. The APA's code of conduct toolkit will help APA members interpret and uphold the code's principles and values in a range of circumstances that are relevant to contemporary physiotherapy practice.

OUR PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The principles and values of the APA code state what we believe and hold dear as a profession, and how we do things as practitioners, members and volunteers with the APA. The principles support a values-based framework that guides and strengthens our capability to make ethical decisions and provide safe, quality care.

These principles and values apply across a variety of settings, in complex and changing environments to support safe, competent, accountable and caring practice, and to maintain the good standing of the physiotherapy profession.

In many regards, the APA code of conduct mirrors the Physiotherapy Board of Australia's code of conduct and members will value considering both codes concurrently.

Our principles

We believe that health is a fundamental human right. We promote this by respecting and enabling people to achieve their health needs, and by promoting healthcare that is accessible and sustainable now and into the future for everyone in our communities.

The APA code of conduct is based on four ethical principles:

Respect the rights and autonomy of the individual

We take into account another person's views, choices, and actions that are based on that person's values, beliefs and culture. We assess a person's capacity to think and act autonomously, and support them to exercise their rights. We demonstrate respect for people who cannot decide or act autonomously, and for those whose choices may cause harm.

Cause no harm

We act in the best interests of our clients and communities to avoid or minimise harm. We identify the causes and effects of harms, whether intentional or unintentional. We find out how to prevent, manage and mitigate harms, and minimise them once they have been identified.

Advance the common good

We serve the interests of the whole community by protecting and promoting health to improve the wellbeing of communities and act based not only on what is good for the individual, but also for communities and the wider society.

Act fairly

We address social injustice and inequity by addressing the social, economic, demographic, or geographic drivers that affect people's health.

OUR VALUES

Respect

We recognise and respect the rights, needs, dignity and diversity of all individuals.

We demonstrate that we understand and believe in the equality of all clients and their family and carers, and of colleagues and others in the workplace. We are courteous and civil to all others, independent of personal characteristics. Our care is client and family-centred. We act with humility and show empathy and care by taking into account an individual's values, choices and needs, as well as their situation, perspective, and feelings.

Build trust

We ensure the trust placed in us is justified.

We earn the trust of others by demonstrating high-level knowledge and skills in our care and by being accountable for our actions.

We understand, practice and promote the principles and values of the APA code of conduct. We comply with the intent and spirit of laws, regulations and other publications governing physiotherapy in Australia as well as those that govern membership of the Australian Physiotherapy Association.

Collaborate

We collaborate with consumers and colleagues to promote safe, quality care.

We create and encourage a culture where open and honest communication is encouraged and safe. We listen and ensure understanding.

We promote environments that are characterised by trust and respect. We are courteous and civil with other healthcare providers, regulators, administrators, communities, and with consumers, their families and their carers.

We work with common purpose and intent. We share planning and decision-making, solve problems, set goals and assume responsibility. We provide accurate, timely, appropriate and clear information, providing the necessary feedback and follow-up.

Continuously improve

We continuously improve our practice.

We monitor, evaluate, reflect on and adapt our practice to improve the safety and quality of care as well as the welfare of consumers and ourselves.

We understand, apply and promote the concepts of a culture of quality to our area of practice and healthcare setting.

Use healthcare resources wisely

We promote the sustainable use of healthcare services.

We are socially responsible corporate citizens. We ensure that safe, quality healthcare is available now and into the future for all Australians by using healthcare resources appropriately, and by promoting the efficient and responsible use of resources.