



## Position Statement

# Code of Conduct for Members of the New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists

### **PREAMBLE**

The relationship between the New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists (NZSA) and its members is based on mutual reciprocity, respect and responsibility. The NZSA is committed to represent, advocate, inform and support members both professionally and personally, while NZSA members also have responsibilities in relation to the Society as outlined in this document.

Membership of the NZSA is a privilege which comes with a requirement that members practise in a professional and ethical manner for the benefit of patients, the community, the Society and the medical profession.

The relationship that members have with the Society should be based on trust and respect. Members are also expected to engage with the NZSA, which includes sharing their views and providing input into the Society's work.

### **NZSA membership considerations**

All members have a responsibility to:

- Establish, develop and maintain relationships with NZSA staff, representatives and colleagues based on trust and respect.
- Demonstrate professional and personal courtesy, integrity and honesty.
- Safeguard all confidential NZSA material reserved for members.
- Avoid aggressive, offensive or abusive conduct.
- Engage with the NZSA by providing input to NZSA surveys and other communications seeking member feedback.
- Become an advocate for NZSA by promoting the role of the Society.

### **Professional considerations**

The NZSA supports professional practice which requires:

- Honesty with patients – doctors must provide relevant pre-operative information and obtain informed consent.
  - Doctors to practise open disclosure with patients and peers in cases of misadventure.
  - Participation in self-regulation, continuous quality improvement and remediation (where required).
  - Maintenance of patient confidentiality and privacy.
  - Maintenance of appropriate relations with patients and healthcare professionals.
  - Improved quality of health care – doctors must work to set and improve standards, reduce medical error, increase patient safety, and should deliver high-value healthcare and avoid inappropriate use of health resources.
  - Advocacy for improved and equitable access to health care.
  - Recognition and management of conflicts of interest.
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## Ethical considerations

- All members have an ethical responsibility for the welfare of their patients. To this end the NZSA requires all members to conduct themselves in accordance with good ethical practice and all professional documents published by ANZCA.
- The NZSA also endorses the Medical Council of New Zealand Code of Conduct publication entitled “Good Medical Practice”<sup>1</sup> and the Code of Ethics of the New Zealand Medical Association,<sup>2</sup> as relevant and appropriate to New Zealand anaesthetists.
- The NZSA also endorses the Health and Disability Commissioner’s Code of Rights<sup>3</sup> for patients, which is a regulation under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act.
- Anaesthetists have an ethical responsibility to the healthcare providers they work for, and healthcare providers also have a responsibility to anaesthetists.<sup>4</sup> This includes ensuring that the Anaesthetist practises within the bounds of their expertise, and that both parties act with the ongoing health and wellbeing of the individual practitioner in mind.<sup>5 6 7</sup>
- Anaesthetists have a responsibility to themselves, their colleagues, their specialty and their profession.<sup>8</sup> They should maintain their own health and wellbeing through appropriate consultation with an independent treating doctor, whilst avoiding self-prescription and/or substance abuse. Anaesthetists should also assist colleagues to access appropriate counselling services where necessary.<sup>9</sup>
- Anaesthetists must maintain the skill and competence levels required of them and take part in continuing professional development (CPD), ongoing risk management, continuous quality improvement and regular and systematic audit.
- Anaesthetists have a responsibility to the community and wider society. They may on occasion be called on to act as an expert witness. Such testimony should be truly expert, impartial and available to all parties.<sup>10</sup>

## Regulatory environment

The NZSA expects that practitioners will comply with the Medical Council of New Zealand Code of Conduct (“*Good Medical Practice*”). There is also a requirement to maintain Professional Indemnity Insurance and CPD, with ongoing registration linked to both CPD and recency of practice.

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1 Medical Council of New Zealand “Good Medical Practice,” June 2016 [www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/good-medical-practice.pdf](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/good-medical-practice.pdf)

2 New Zealand Medical Association Code of Ethics revised 2014 [www.nzma.org.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/31435/NZMA-Code-of-Ethics-2014-A4.pdf](http://www.nzma.org.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/31435/NZMA-Code-of-Ethics-2014-A4.pdf)

3 Health and Disability Commissioner’s Code of Rights [www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights](http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights)

4 ASA PS07 Credentials and Clinical Privileges

5 ANZCA PS49 Guidelines on the Health of Specialists and Trainees [www.anzca.edu.au/resources/professional-documents/documents/professional-standards/professional-standards-49.html](http://www.anzca.edu.au/resources/professional-documents/documents/professional-standards/professional-standards-49.html)

6 *ibid*

7 *ibid*

8 *ibid*

9 *ibid*

10 Medical Council of New Zealand “Cole’s Medical Practice in New Zealand,” 2013, Chapter 17, p.154

[www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/Coles/Chapter-17.pdf](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/Coles/Chapter-17.pdf)

11 Medical Council of New Zealand “Good Medical Practice,” June 2014, [www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/good-medical-practice.pdf](http://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/News-and-Publications/good-medical-practice.pdf), no.68

The MCNZ also requires all healthcare practitioners to undertake Mandatory Reporting of behaviour that is in breach of the code.<sup>11</sup>

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