

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION**

All students from Stellenbosch University, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, are expected to adhere to the following guidelines during practical sessions at institutions:

**1. ABSENCE FROM CLINICAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students must inform the relevant institution and their own department/division, on the day, if they are unable to meet their responsibilities as a result of illness or other unforeseen circumstances.

**2. DRESS CODE**

Students must, at all times, dress according to the Faculty/relevant Department/-Division's regulations.

**3. IDENTIFICATION (See Safety Guidelines document)**

Students must wear visible identification of Stellenbosch University at all times.

**4. FORM OF ADDRESS**

All adult patients/clients must be addressed in a professional manner as Sir or Madam whereas children can be by name. However, students are expected to respect the request of a patient/client to be addressed in another manner.

**5. PATIENT/CLIENT RIGHTS**

**5.1 The right to privacy and respect**

- The patient/client's dignity, privacy, autonomy and safety must be acknowledged by the student and he/she must act accordingly towards the patient/client.
- Inappropriate discussion regarding the patient/client's illness, prognosis and treatment possibilities should not take place in the presence of the patient/client or afterwards.
- The patient's/client's possessions must be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
- When a patient/client is visited at home, the student must be aware that he/she is a guest in that person's home and not show any negative verbal or non-verbal reactions to the person, his/her environment or belongings.
- The patient/client has the right to, wherever possible, be addressed in his/her own language. If necessary, the student must do all in his/her power to respect this right and where possible, obtain translation assistance from an appropriate translator, keeping in mind the patient/client's right to privacy.

- The patient/client's culture and religion must be respected. The patient/client's religious beliefs might require modifications to your management, for example, it might be necessary to schedule treatment on another day, or the patient/client might need to abstain from certain activities.
- Cultural habits differ and the student must at all times show understanding and not act prejudicially.

## 5.2 The right to make decisions concerning his/her health

- The patient/client has the right to decide for themselves about aspects involved in his/her health. Sometimes these decisions can directly contradict what the health worker would consider to be the best option. There may be no negative attitude or behaviour toward the patient/client – rather try and find out what the patient/client's motivation for his/her attitude or behaviour is. The patient/client must be thoroughly informed of the advantages and disadvantages of the different options, so that he/she is able to make an informed decision.
- The patient/client also has the right to a second opinion – even if he/she is paying nothing or very little for the health care service.

## 5.3 The health service's personnel and equipment

- All personnel must be shown the necessary respect. The student must consider that he/she is a guest at the relevant health service and must promote a spirit of co-operation rather than make demands.
- Equipment must be handled with respect and no equipment or stock may be removed from the premises without permission.
- Mutual arrangements must be made beforehand if equipment has to be shared.

## 6. CONFIDENTIALITY

- All information obtained from a patient/client is considered confidential. Information may only be shared with other team members for treatment purposes. No information may be given to family/friends regarding a patient/client's problems and/or progress without the patient/client's consent. This consent must be written and the person, to whom the information is to be provided, must be identified by name. An exception can be made in the case of children under the age of 14 years, where information can be provided to the parents/guardians ***in which case, they will have to give written consent regarding making information public to family/friends of the minor.*** Written information regarding the patient/client must be handled confidentially and must be kept safe at all times.
- All records must be regarded as legal documentation and no records may be removed from the patient/client's folder.
- Record-keeping must be handled professionally.

## **7. PREVENTIVE/SAFETY MEASURES**

- Ascertain the policy regarding the noting of sensitive diagnoses e.g. HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Sexually transmitted diseases and Malignancies at the service where you are working.
- Ascertain the University's guidelines regarding the handling, and reporting, of accidents and sharp object injuries.

## **8. INTERDISCIPLINARY CO-OPERATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

- Health personnel are bound to interdisciplinary co-operation by knowing and respecting each other's role and functions as well as planning common holistic treatment regimens that augment and prevent overlapping. If a team member is busy treating a patient and another team member would also like to treat the patient, they should communicate with one another to determine the most suitable time for the treatment's needs.
- Students may only provide treatment to patients/clients for conditions that fall within their current level of training. They must therefore be aware of relevant referral routes if treatment of the patient/client falls outside this level of training and/or division.
- Documentation concerning all relevant arrangements, appointments and agreements made regarding a patient/client's treatment, must be adhered to.
- No agreements may be entered into with a patient/client or personnel member for the personal gain of the student – this includes any actions and activities, gifts or monies.