



# **CANADIAN SOCIETY OF OSTEOPATHY & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

## What is a Code of Ethics?

A Code of Ethics is a statement which expresses the primary ethical values, obligations and goals of the profession. It is a commitment which serves to bear witness to our promise as a profession to uphold the values and ethical obligations expressed in the Code.

## What is the Osteopathy Scope of Practice?

The practice of Osteopathy includes:

- the assessment of the whole body, soft tissue and joints.
- adjustment of structural conditions, joint articulation, myofascial release, visceral and cranial
- stimulation and distribution of the fluids and free forces of the body
- promotion of cooperation and harmony inside the body as a mechanism

## CODE OF ETHICS

*This code is entered into voluntarily by all members of the SCOAM.*

1. An Osteopathic Practitioner will conduct him/herself in professional duties in accordance with this code as approved by the Society.
2. An Osteopathic Practitioner must value the dignity and worth of all persons regardless of age, race, culture, creed, sexual identity, gender, ability and/or health status.
3. An Osteopathic Practitioner must maintain his/her knowledge and practice at an acceptable level of competence by continuing professional development (CPD) credits.
4. An Osteopathic Practitioner must only perform or participate in those procedures that are within his/her competency, and for which he/she is appropriately qualified, and must refer those patients whose needs or requests are outside his/her competency.
5. All services and functions practised by an Osteopathic Practitioner must be provided in accordance with this code.
6. An Osteopathic Practitioner's ordinary place of practice must provide privacy and confidentiality for his/her patients and all records.
7. An Osteopathic Practitioner must not exploit his/her relationship with a patient in any way. In particular there must not be a sexual relationship with a patient during the professional relationship.
8. An Osteopathic Practitioner must refrain from criticising colleagues in public, or in a clinical setting. This does not apply to the critical evaluation of published works nor to expert testimony in court.
9. An Osteopathic Practitioner must not, unless required by law, release information about a patient unless the patient gives consent in writing.
10. An Osteopathic Practitioner must inform his/her patients about treatment including material risks, complications and reactions, and explain the nature and purpose of the treatment.
11. An Osteopathic Practitioner must not undertake research involving human subjects without the research protocol being approved by a properly constituted ethics committee. This applies in particular to students or trainees who are being considered as subjects for research.
12. An Osteopathic Practitioner must not approve of or collaborate in the use of osteopathic techniques by untrained persons except when those persons are in supervised training.
13. An Osteopathic Practitioner must respect the ethical, religious and political beliefs of his or her patients and must be willing to refer patients to a more suitable Osteopathic Practitioner should such issues seem likely to affect the professional relationship.
14. An Osteopathic Practitioner must respect the wish of a patient for a second opinion and must, if practicable, help the patient obtain a competent second opinion.

15. If an Osteopathic Practitioner has reason to believe that a colleague is behaving in an unprofessional manner, or that his/her standard of practice falls substantially below acceptable standards then, the colleague must be approached in a helpful way. If this is not practicable, then the Osteopathic Practitioner should report the behaviour to the Society - which will then have to meet to consider any appropriate action.
16. An Osteopathic Practitioner must not treat a patient whilst his or her ability to do so is impaired by the influence of alcohol or drugs.
17. An Osteopathic Practitioner in practice, and for a minimum of seven years after retiring from practice, must maintain Professional Indemnity Insurance coverage - in an amount judged to be sufficient by the Board at the time.
18. An Osteopathic Practitioner must immediately advise the Society in the event of any of the following.
19. If convicted of a criminal offence in Ontario or elsewhere.
20. If named as a defendant in a court action for negligence or other malpractice in the provision of osteopathic services.



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120 St. Patrick St., Unit 701  
Toronto ON M5T 2X7  
**Tel:** 416-477-6088  
Email: [info@osteopathysociety.com](mailto:info@osteopathysociety.com)  
[www.osteopathysociety.com](http://www.osteopathysociety.com)