



College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta

Code of Ethics

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The Alberta Dental Association and College is now operating under the name College of Dental Surgeons
of Alberta. This name will become official when Alberta's *Health Professions Act* is amended.

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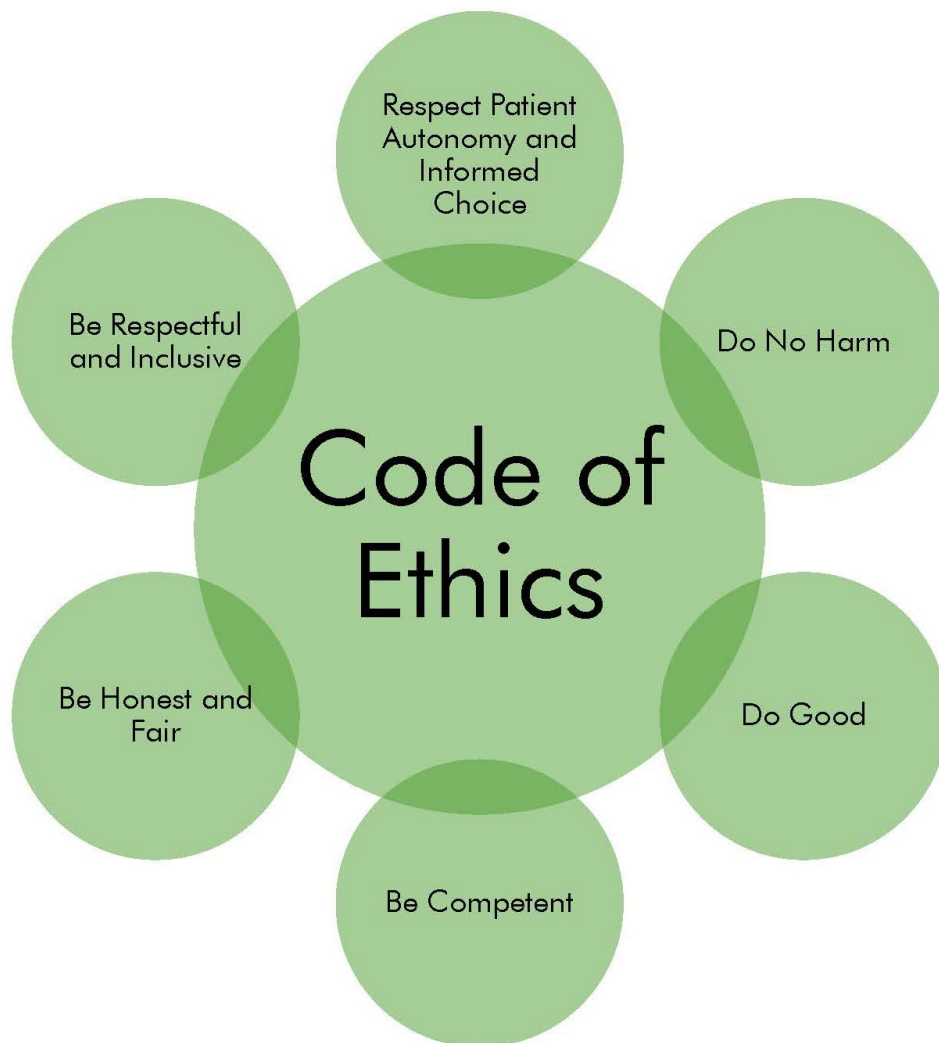
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Code of Ethics: a Code of Professional Conduct for Alberta Dentists

The Code of Ethics is a set of principles of professional conduct that governs dentists, regulated members of the College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta (the “College”) who are generalists or specialists, and establishes the expectations for dentists in fulfilling duties to their patients, the public and the profession. This Code of Ethics affirms and clarifies principles that are definitive to professional and ethical care and conduct. Within this Code of Ethics, the use of the words care and treatment will include all professional services and related aspects of health of the head and neck region, and associated facial structures, and their relationship to overall health and vice versa.

The Code of Ethics presents the ethical duties and expectations of conduct that along with the Bylaws, Standards of Practice, *Health Professions Act* and Regulations are binding on dentists.



Respect Patient Autonomy and Informed Choice

At all times, a dentist must respect and support the public right to choose one's own dentist.

A dentist has a duty to assess and inform the patient of the nature of the condition requiring potential treatment, the treatment and non-treatment options available including the advantages, the disadvantages, the possible outcomes, the potential significant risks, the anticipated course of treatment, and the costs of these options. A patient makes the final decision about choice of treatment and choice of dentist to provide any treatment or to follow-up after referral or second opinion.

Do No Harm

Treatment must be intended not to leave the patient in a worse condition than if no treatment had been provided.

Do Good

Treatment must be intended to result in an improvement in the patient's condition, prevention from disease and/or deterioration, or maintenance of the patient's condition.

Be Competent

A dentist's primary obligation is to provide service to patients through the delivery of quality care in a competent and timely fashion. A dentist must provide assessment and/or treatment for a patient only when currently competent to do so by reason of their education and training, experience, or demonstrated continued competence.

A dentist must keep their knowledge of dentistry current and must provide treatment in accordance with currently accepted and applied professional standards.

Be Honest and Fair

A dentist must be truthful, cooperative, and candid in all professional matters. This means fully disclosing and not misrepresenting, embellishing, or omitting any information to patients and the public about dental matters, other professionals, and the College. A dentist has a responsibility to uphold the integrity of the profession, other members, and themselves.

A dentist must be fair by treating all individuals, patients, colleagues and third parties without prejudice or discrimination in a just and equitable manner.

Be Respectful and Inclusive

A dentist must accept a patient without discrimination based on all protected grounds in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

A dentist must maintain appropriate and dignified boundaries in the patient and dentist relationship. A dentist must not sexualize any interaction with a patient. A dentist must maintain a safe and healthy care environment for patients, employees, and other health care providers.

Fitness to Practice and Incapacity

A dentist may experience impediments to competence. A dentist must inform the College when any condition affects their ability to practice safely and competently. It is unethical for a dentist to practice while incapacitated, impaired, or intoxicated or where any other condition impairs the dentist's ability to practice or provide care safely and with good judgment.

Ensure Confidentiality and Release of Patient Information

Patient information, verbally, written or electronically acquired and maintained by the dentist and other parties authorized to store or manage patient information, must be kept in strict confidence except as required by the *Health Information Act* or as authorized by the patient.

Prescribing Drugs

A dentist may prescribe drugs only when indicated specifically within their scope of practice. A dentist must not prescribe drugs for themselves. A drug register must be established to record and account for all opioids and Schedule 1 controlled substances prescribed for in office patient use.

Accountability

A dentist, by entering into a contract with an organization or other party involving the practice of dentistry, neither reduces personal professional responsibilities nor transfers any part of those ethical or legal responsibilities to that organization or other party. A dentist may enter into an agreement with individuals or organizations to provide dental care and services and those agreements cannot be contrary to the *Health Professions Act* and Regulations, *Health Information Act*, Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and Bylaws of the College.

Cooperate with the College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta

A dentist must cooperate with any requests of the College, its officials, and committees, to enable them to fulfil their legislated responsibilities.



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