

Definition

The SHAS Code of Ethics is a document established by the members of the Association for the Speech-Language Therapists practising in Singapore. This is a dynamic document that will evolve as the context in which Speech-Language Therapists practice changes.

The objectives are:

- To delineate the minimum acceptable ethical standards of practice;
- To safeguard the best interests of the population we serve and
- To maintain a high standard of professionalism

The Code of Ethics is a set of rules that govern the decisions we make as professionals. Encompassing issues of trust, integrity, respect and client welfare, the Code of Ethics is in accordance with our core values.

1) Client Welfare

- Competent Service:** Therapists are to provide services as recommended by the *Competency Based Standards of Practice* (CBS).
- Resource Utilisation:** Therapists are to ensure high quality service by utilising all available resources, appropriate to each client's condition.
- Client Education:** Therapists are to fully inform and educate clients and/or caregivers about nature and outcome of assessment(s) and management.
- Clients' Rights:** Therapists are to respect the client's decision in the therapeutic process.
- Prognostic Statements:** Therapists should be guided by evidence-based practice when making prognostic statements.
- Program Evaluation:** Therapists are to review services periodically for efficacy and to facilitate discharge planning.
- Non-discrimination:** Therapists are to provide services to all irrespective of gender, age, race, religion and/or origin.
- Confidentiality:** Therapists are to maintain confidentiality of client details is to be maintained at all times. Information is to be revealed to higher authorities or when required by law.
- Informed Consent:** Therapists are to obtain consent from client and/or caregiver for video and audio recording for purposes of assessment, treatment or other purposes.
- Documentation:** Therapists are to document details of treatment provided to allow for continuity of care by colleagues or other professionals. Documents are to be stored in a safe manner for a minimum of 5 years, or as stipulated by organizational policy.
- Continuity of Care:** Therapists are to ensure continuity of care by communicating verbally or in writing, with colleagues or other professionals where appropriate, e.g. transfer to another Speech-Language Therapist, discharge etc.
- Health and Safety:** Therapists are to uphold the health and safety of clients and/or caregivers at all times.



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2) Professional Competency

- a) **Qualifications:** Therapists are to provide clinical services only if they hold a degree in Speech-Language Therapy or equivalent courses, recognized in the country of training.
 - b) **Scope of Service:** Therapists are to provide only services that are within their scope of training and/or competence.
 - c) **Professional Development:** Therapists are to maintain and upgrade skills by engaging in continuing education.
 - d) **Therapy Assistance:** Therapists are to delegate and supervise assistants on identified clinical tasks.
 - e) **Equipment:** Therapists are to ensure all technical equipment used is properly calibrated, and in good working condition.
 - f) **Clinical Supervision:** Therapists are to be wholly responsible for the actions of any students or persons under their supervision.
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3) Responsibility to Society

- a) **Credentials:** Therapists shall not misrepresent their credentials, competence, training or experience.
 - b) **Conflict of Interest:** Therapists shall not participate in professional activities that will result in a conflict of interest.
 - c) **Accurate Representation:** Therapists are to ensure that information to the public about the profession, services available, assessment or research results etc., is accurate.
 - d) **Advertising:** Therapists shall advertise in a professional manner through channels such as listings in the telephone directory, letters to general practitioners/specialists and organizations, conferences, trade exhibitions, journals and professional publications.
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4) Collaboration with Other Professionals/Organisations

- a) **Teamwork:** Therapists are to foster good working relationships with other professionals irrespective of gender, age, race, religion and/or origin.
 - b) **Respect:** Therapists shall respect professional boundaries and not engage in activities that will lead to misrepresentation.
 - c) **Contributions:** Therapists are to award due credit to fellow professionals and/or organizations while engaging in combined research or projects.
 - d) **Communication:** Therapists are to exercise professionalism when communicating with others involved in client management.
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5) Research and Training

- a) **Informed Consent:** Therapists are to ensure client's and/or caregiver's consent is obtained prior to participation in research, training, public education etc.
- b) **Approval:** Therapists are to ensure all research proposals are approved by a relevant ethics committee before commencement.
- c) **Research Findings:** Therapists shall make available all research findings.



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6) Inquiries

- a) **Protem Committee:** All formal complaints and/or inquiries brought to the attention of SHAS will be addressed by a protem committee.
- b) **Cooperation:** Therapists are to fully cooperate in the process of investigation.