

CODE OF ETHICS

This *Code of Ethics* articulates core principles that serve as a guideline and standard for ethical practice at Closing the Gap Healthcare (CTG). It is based on common ethical principles including autonomy, justice, beneficence, and non-maleficence. To reflect the people-centred and interprofessional practice setting at CTG, this *Code of Ethics* was informed by members of our Client and Family Advisory Council, members of our Ethics Committee, and the Codes of Ethics of their respective colleges.

Advocacy

We have the responsibility to help improve the awareness of, accessibility to, and quality of our services by advocating on behalf of our clients. We will seek guidance internally and externally from our organization for those situations that could place the organization and/or its clients at risk.

Example: A therapist identifies and advocates for resources and supports to meet the client's needs e.g. ADP funding application.

Privacy and Confidentiality:

We respect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality. Relevant information is shared among other healthcare providers involved in the client's care. Information is only disclosed with the client's or their substitute decision maker's informed consent, when it is legally required, and when failure to disclose could cause harm.

Example: Workers keep personal information confidential unless it is legally required, or informed consent is obtained before disclosing confidential information.

Conflict of Interest

We will not compromise services to our clients for our own personal benefit.

Example: Workers will not solicit business from clients or families for personal benefit or profit.

Commitment to Quality Services

We are committed to providing exceptional quality services in efficient and innovative ways to benefit our clients.

Example: A healthcare provider attends regular continuing education sessions to maintain their competence, knowledge, and skills.

Preserving Dignity

We respect the unique worth, inherent dignity, and differing beliefs of clients and staff. We treat every person with respect and are sensitive to the diversity of our clients and staff.

Example: The nurse respects the family's religious customs and rituals following the death of their loved one.

Competency and Accountability

We are committed to education and training to maintain a high standard of competence through continued development of provider behaviours, skills, knowledge, and judgement. We demonstrate reliability and accountability by taking responsibility for our decisions and actions, complying with law and policy.

Example: Regulated health professionals adhere to the standards of professional practice set by their respective professional regulatory body.

Informed Choice and Empowerment

We respect the client's right to make decisions about their own health. We provide relevant information to support clients and substitute decision makers in making informed choices about their health. We assist clients to make choices in keeping with their values, beliefs, and care goals.

Example: A client's right to refuse to take medications is respected if the client can understand the consequences of their actions.

Client and Worker Safety

We recognize that the community work setting provides a unique working environment for all of us. We safeguard clients from unsafe, unethical, and incompetent behaviour. We will take necessary measures to ensure the safety of our clients and our staff.

Example: A worker recognizes, intervenes, and reports concerns about client abuse or workplace bullying to the appropriate people.

Fairness and Equitable Access

We uphold principles of justice and human rights in our practice by demonstrating honesty, impartiality, and integrity. All clients and staff are treated equally, fairly, and respectfully regardless of their income, age, gender, ethnicity, race, physical or mental ability, lifestyle, and any other factors. The client has a right to equal access to resources and services.

Example: Staff approaches the appropriate authority to discuss resource allocation issues to develop appropriate solutions.

Relationships, Communication, and Collaboration

We strive to work collaboratively with clients, families, colleagues, communities, agencies, and other members of the healthcare team to maximize the effectiveness of client services. We value each team member's knowledge, skills, and contributions.

Example: We build collaborative relationships with colleagues within the organization and with clients, families, communities, and other agencies to deliver quality services

This Code of Ethics was originally adapted from *The Community Ethics Toolkit* developed by the Toronto Central Community Care Access Centre (2008). Codes of Ethics from Canadian Association of Social Workers, Dietitians of Canada, College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario, College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario, Canadian Nurses Association, and College of Nurses of Ontario were reviewed in the development of this Code of Ethics.