

CODE OF ETHICS FOR PHILIPPINE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION MEMBER INFIRMARIES AND HOSPITAL

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. The hospital is an abode for the care of the sick, a place for those chosen as instruments of healing, to render health care at their best, in a manner of how God will care for those are ill, and in a manner that the sick under hospital care is a brother or a sister;
2. All patients are humans created equal by God and shall receive the same best humane treatment regardless of race, creed, sex or gender, political beliefs, religion or financial status in life, subject only to that limitation imposed by the patient's right to decide for himself/herself or by those legally allowed to decide for the patient, and subject to such right of the patient afforded by local and international law and local and international norms of hospital practice;
3. The hospital, more particularly a private hospital or in a government hospital allowed by law, is a place primarily for service especially for the poor and profit shall only be incidental;
4. Within its means, hospitals must strive to engage in research studies and activities that would benefit patients and in the community in the future;
5. Hospitals must strive to regularly upgrade and update its services, in terms of professional services and technology, for better and higher quality services for the patient and the community;

II. THE PATIENT

1. Hospitals shall always afford the sick the best humane treatment possible but not beyond the limit provided for a law, and not beyond that which it is only capable to do, and must always consider patient like one's own brother or sister in a home;
2. Hospitals shall always respect the patient's rights accorded by local and international laws, and according the local and international norms of hospital practice;
3. Except in cases of emergency or in situations covered by law, hospitals must inform the patient why, if ever, he/she could not be admitted, and in which case, the hospital shall assist the patient for his/her transfer to another hospital of his/her own choice;
4. In the case of private hospitals, the patient, in advance, shall always be informed of the estimate of hospital expenses including the professional fees in order that the patient could come to an intelligent decision whether or not to be confined in another hospital. In the case of package rates, the patient must be informed in advance of the amount of difference between the estimate of the total hospital bill and package rates he/she will pay at the end of hospital confinement;
5. The hospital must always make the patient aware of any ongoing research study or activity and, if applicable, it shall encourage the patient to participate in the study but within the strict bounds and requirements of ethics governing research studies;

III. THE HOSPITAL AND THE GOVERNMENT

1. The hospital, being license under and by virtue of existing laws, shall always conform to the policies, rules and regulations of the government and shall, in a proper legal forum or venue, contest unreasonable government issuances if any according to existing legal procedures;
2. The hospital must inform the government of any illegal or grossly unethical practice of other hospitals which could result to the irreversible disadvantage or harm to the patient or the community;
3. The hospital, whenever called upon, must always cooperate with the government in the administration of justice, in addressing problems of epidemics and disasters, and in the promotion of health programs and activities that would benefit the patient and the community.

IV. THE HOSPITAL AND THE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

1. The health professionals are the instruments of healing in a hospital thus they must be accorded respect in the performance of their duties and responsibilities to the patient;
2. The right of the health professionals under existing laws must be respected but within the limits of its means and capabilities;
3. The hospital must report to the government any illegal or grossly unethical acts committed by its health professionals that are too disadvantageous or harmful to the patient or to the community;
4. The hospital must regularly advise its health professionals to upgrade and update their respective knowledge, attitude and skills in the care and treatment of their patients;
5. The hospital must regularly advise its health professionals to engage in research studies and activities that would benefit patients in the future;
6. In case of any intention to provide innovative treatments, the hospital must always remind the patient's attending health professionals of the strict requirements of ethics governing innovative modalities of treatments;

V. THE HOSPITAL AND OTHER HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS

1. Every hospital must maintain a harmonious relationship with other hospitals or health care institutions;
2. In case of transfer of patient to other hospital of choice:
 - a.) The transferring hospital must always give pertinent advance information about the patient to be transferred to the receiving hospital;
 - b.) In case of refusal, the receiving hospital, through its health professional, must inform the patient the reason or the basis of its refusal of the transfer;
3. In its relationship with other hospitals or other health care institutions, a hospital must conduct itself according to the principle of "*Don't do unto others what you don't want others do unto to you*";

4. A hospital, for whatever reason, must not make statement/s that is/are derogatory or damaging to other hospitals and the staff;
5. Competition among hospitals must always be in the form of raising the bar of quality service but never for financial gain or profit, provided that the raising of the bar of standards by one hospital shall not be at the expense of another hospital;
6. Pirating patient of another hospital is unethical in whatever form except in cases of transfer of patient according to accepted rules and norms. The following acts are considered unethical:
 - a. Offering unconscionable discounts or packages for purposes of soliciting patients, provided that this may be allowed in cases where there is launching or celebrating of annual events such as anniversaries, government programs, and similar events;
 - b. Paying or offering to pay commissions or rebates to health professionals for purposes of soliciting patients;
 - c. Advertisements by a hospital with statements claiming to be the “best hospital”, or “hospital with the best doctors” or otherwise statements depicting, directly or indirectly that other hospitals are inferior to the advertising hospital;

VI. THE HOSPITAL AND THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

1. The choice of medicines by the hospital shall be in accordance with the medical indications required by standard norms of medical practice, both local and international;
2. Sponsorships of events like conventions, seminars, conference or other activities shall be in accordance with existing laws and policies issued by the government;
3. No display of advertisement of pharmaceutical products within the premises of the hospitals shall be allowed except in sponsorships in special celebrations such as anniversaries, national programs, and similar activities, provided however that this event shall not be a reason to exclusively patronize the product of a sponsoring pharmaceutical industry;
4. Subject to limitations imposed by the Ethics Department of the hospital, the following sponsorship of events may be allowed:
 - a. Introduction of new products for the benefit of the patient and the community;
 - b. Sponsorship of attendees to conventions or conferences, local and international, provided that the event is connected with the duty and responsibility of the attendee/s in the hospital and will ultimately result to the benefit of the patient;
 - c. Such other events or sponsorships as may be allowed by the Ethics Department of the hospital.