



European
Federation of
Periodontology

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PERIODONTOLOGY
4 rue de la Presse, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

www.efp.org

European Federation of Periodontology Code of Conduct

The European Federation of Periodontology (EFP), founded in 1991, is the umbrella organisation for 30 national scientific societies devoted to promoting research, education and awareness of periodontal science and practice.

This Code of Conduct (CoC) set outs and explains the principles to be applied by the EFP, its member organisations, and all those involved in supporting the aims and objectives of the Federation.

This CoC, which compliments codes of conduct of national societies of Periodontology, relevant regulatory and licensing authorities and related bodies, including national dental associations, was approved, and, from time to time, will be reviewed by the General Assembly of the EFP.

Principles

The following principles are not mutually exclusive; they should be practised collectively to help best realise the aims and objectives of the Federation.

1. Behave professionally and ethically
2. Communicate effectively
3. Heighten awareness of contemporary science and practice
4. Promote excellence in patient-centred, evidence-based care
5. Champion equality and diversity
6. Champion sustainability
7. Maintain, develop and share knowledge, understanding and skills
8. Create opportunity for students and trainees to excel
9. Pursue research capable of advancing knowledge and understanding
10. Demonstrate and promote leadership
11. Declare and learn from concerns and failures



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Applying the principles

Ethical and professional behaviour is an underpinning principle across the spectrum of the art and science of healthcare, characterised by an unswerving commitment to excellence. In this unremitting service, organisations and the individuals forming them must always act within the scope of existing knowledge, understanding and skills and with honesty and integrity, protecting and ensuring proper use of the resources and assets of the Federation. At all times, professional organisations and the individuals forming them should behave the way they expect to be treated. Behaviours and actions which undermine confidence and trust are unacceptable.

Communication is central to relating to others, being understood and advancing aims and objectives. Effective communication, which takes many different forms, must be styled according to the message and intended audience. Good communication, complete and free of ambiguity, is fundamental to informed advancement. All communications must be considered, mindful of requirements to maintain confidentiality and, wherever possible, delivered in ways to enhance mutual understanding and confidence. Many complaints, misunderstandings and causes for concern stem from poor communication.

Awareness of science and practice helps change attitudes and behaviours and stimulates innovation. Realisation of capabilities and opportunity fosters collaboration and, amongst other important benefits, facilitates the recruitment and retention of talent. Lack of awareness frustrates the realisation of aims and objectives, undermining purpose and mission. Heightening awareness is invariably rewarded with increased clarity and, in turn, enhanced commonality of purpose. Awareness is empowering and encourages new thinking. As part of the awareness of contemporary scientific thinking, in planning activities and developments consideration should be given to limiting the environmental impact and measures to promote environmental sustainability.

Excellence in clinical care for the benefit and wellbeing of individuals should be central to all thinking, planning, actions and behaviours at all levels. The existing and anticipated future healthcare needs and rights of communities and individuals must take priority over organisational, professional and personal considerations, advancement and priorities. Excellence in clinical care encompasses the controlled introduction and appropriate applications of innovations in clinical practice and the timely replacement of outdated approaches to management. Patient trust, underpinned by honesty and objectivity in obtaining informed consent, assumes clinical care intended to provide the best possible clinical



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outcome. The EFP and all those who support the Federation must have unswerving commitment to these principles and aims to advance patient care and improve outcomes through the delivery of the EFP strategic plan.

Diversity and equality requires attitudes, behaviours and policies which ensure equal treatment for all on grounds of nationality, age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. All actions, policies, publications and communications should strive to exemplify excellence in diversity and equality, including leadership in addressing health inequalities.

Sustainability in general terms means: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Acknowledgment of emerging trends in society and technology and adopting measures to help the environment and the ethical prosperity of the profession is key to a sustainable future.

Knowledge, understanding and skills must be maintained and wherever possible enhanced. Knowledge, understanding and skills, together with best practice should be openly shared in the interests of individuals, the profession and healthcare in general. To achieve effective dissemination, such sharing should be complete, diverse and free of barriers, borders and boundaries. Shared knowledge should be evidence-based, understood within its context, and skills should be validated by outcomes. Knowledge is of little value without understanding, and both knowledge and understanding must inform skills.

Education and training, in addition to being contemporary and aimed at making students and trainees fit for future purpose, should be engaging, inspirational and effective. Reflection, feedback and peer assessment are fundamental to continuous quality improvement in education and training. Colleagues should be taught, trained and mentored in ways which satisfy the requirements of contemporary quality assurance. In satisfying aims and objectives, education and training should create opportunity for students and trainees to realise their full potential.

Research should drive advances in knowledge and understanding and, in the clinical environment, extend the evidence-base for best clinical practice. The value of research which fails to achieve these goals, or lacks research power, should be questioned. All research must be ethically justifiable. Research which involves humans and animals must comply with the Declaration of Helsinki (7th revision, 2013), be granted appropriate ethical approval prior to being commenced and should demonstrate equipoise throughout the research design process. Researchers must disseminate their findings, including negative findings, in the interests of,



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amongst other considerations, best use of research resources. Opportunity to pursue research should be viewed as a privilege, with responsibility to enhance knowledge and understanding.

Leadership of organisations, teams and practices is critical to effective collective and collaborative working. To be effective, leadership must be a two-way process: those being led must respect and trust their leadership, and leaders must respect and trust those they lead. To achieve these goals, arrangements for collective working and dynamics, including communications, interactions, support systems and common goals must be open, transparent and subject to continuous quality improvement. The requirements of leadership may change with time and circumstances, with the exceptions of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and honesty which must remain unquestionable.

Concerns, failures and mistakes are normal.

The airing of concerns must be encouraged, and individuals raising such concerns must be free of any adverse consequences or risks of doing so.

Failures and mistakes must always be promptly admitted, with appropriate remedial actions being instigated at the earliest opportunity possible.

Learning from valid concerns, failures and mistakes is fundamental to minimising the risk of recurrence.

Conflicts

It is recognised that the EFP and the national societies which form its membership may, from time to time, be faced with conflicting responsibilities and complex situations which necessitate balancing competing responsibilities and priorities. In such situations, conflicts of interest must be declared and collective, objective professional judgement must be exercised, with the balance of probabilities favouring benefits to the Federation and, in particular, those the EFP exists to serve. Undeclared conflicts which result in improper or fraudulent influence will be considered a serious breach of this CoC.

Dental industry and sponsorship

The EFP promotes and encourages collaborative working and other relationships with dental industry, publishers and other commercial organisations in striving to fulfil its aims and objectives. All such working, relationships and related activities by the Federation, its members and those supporting and contributing to Federation affairs must be openly declared, transparent and suitably documented. Sponsorship from many, different sources and the support of sponsored individuals is vital to the activities, business and ongoing success of the Federation and its members. All sponsorship and other financial support must be both



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declared and, in the process suitably recognised for its contribution to the Federation, especially at times when it may be viewed as a conflict of interest.

Breaches of this CoC, which compromise or bring the EFP into disrepute, may result in remedial sanctions aimed at preserving the reputation, standing and direction of travel of the Federation. Continuing success in the promotion of research, education and awareness of periodontal science and practice must be treasured and protected.