

COUNCIL ON MEMBERSHIP, ETHICS AND JUDICIAL CONCERNS (COMEJC)

The AAO House of Delegates has adopted a revision to the AAO Code of Ethics.

COMEJC Principles of Ethics, Code of Professional Conduct and Advisory Opinions of the American Association of Orthodontists

RESOLVED, that the *Principles of Ethics, Code of Professional Conduct and Advisory Opinions of the American Association of Orthodontists* be amended to include the following:

PRINCIPLE 3: MEMBERS HAVE THE DUTY TO TREAT PEOPLE FAIRLY

(Justice)

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

3.A. Members shall be dedicated to generating public confidence in the orthodontic specialty by improving the quality and availability of orthodontic and dental care to the public.

3.B. Members shall recognize and abide by the laws that apply to the practice of dentistry and orthodontics in their jurisdiction.

3.C. Members shall provide a workplace environment devoid of harassment or inappropriate behavior and a workplace that upholds respectful and cooperative relationships for all employees and patients.

ADVISORY OPINIONS:

3.A. (i) Members may exercise discretion in selecting a patient into their practice, provided that they shall not refuse to accept a patient because of the patient's race, creed, color, sex, national origin, disability, HIV seropositive status, or other legally recognized protected class.

3.A. (ii) Members should pursue changes in laws, requirements, rules and/or regulations within their jurisdiction that are contrary to the best interests of patients.

3.A. (iii) It is ethical to accept for treatment or complete treatment for a patient who has an outstanding balance with a previous practitioner.

3.A. (iv) It is ethical to remove appliances from, or to continue treatment for, a patient not of record upon request by that patient; provided, that all reasonable effort should be made to determine the reason for the request from the patient. It is advisable to consult with the patient's practitioner, if possible, prior to such removal or continuation of treatment.

3.A. (v) It is ethical to withdraw from treating a patient of record, provided that advance written notice to the patient or responsible party is given in accordance with state/provincial laws so as to allow for another provider to be secured.

3.A. (vi) It is ethical for members to provide dental care other than orthodontics unless announcing a practice that "is limited to" orthodontics.

3.B. (i) It is ethical to decline accepting a patient not formerly of record for continuation of routine orthodontic care after being seen for emergency treatment.

3.B. (ii) Members may assign to an auxiliary or other employee only those duties for which they have been appropriately trained and that can be legally performed by such individual in the member's jurisdiction.

3.B. (iii) Members with first-hand knowledge that a colleague is practicing while chemically impaired shall urge such colleagues to seek treatment and have an ethical responsibility to report such evidence to the appropriate state or provincial regulatory body or dental board as required by law.

3.B. (iv) Members should become familiar with signs of abuse and neglect and must report suspected cases to the appropriate authorities in the manner prescribed by state or provincial laws.

3.C. (i) Members shall refrain from inappropriate interpersonal relationships or behavior within the orthodontic workplace and shall promote mutual respect, professional communication and cooperative efforts of all team members to enhance excellence in orthodontic care and assure safe and professional relationships with and between employees and patients

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