



COLLEGE OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS AND AUDIOLOGISTS OF SASKATCHEWAN

CODE OF ETHICS Version (2024)

Preamble

The College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Saskatchewan (CSASK) is a professional regulatory body that protects and serves the public by regulating and supporting audiologists and speech-language pathologists (S-LPs) to ensure competent, safe, ethical practice. CSASK regulated members shall abide by the Code of Ethics, *The Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Act*, By-Laws, and policies of the College. The Code of Ethics sets forth the fundamental values and ethical conduct expectations for the responsible practice of audiology and speech-language pathology. The underlying values of the Code form the rationale for ethical standards and provide the basis for ethical practice and decision-making. The standards within the Code guide members in maintaining professionally acceptable behaviour in their practice. These are also the standards others use to judge the practice of members, and that form the basis for the actions of the CSASK Council.

The Code provides guidance; it cannot offer definitive resolution to all ethical questions that may arise during professional practice nor is it a denial of the existence of other duties equally imperative or other rights not specifically mentioned. Any action taken where the spirit and purpose of the Code of Ethics is not followed is considered a violation of the CSASK Code of Ethics.

Interpretation

CSASK members should interpret the Code of Ethics according to these terms:

- **“College”** means the College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Saskatchewan (CSASK) continued pursuant to section 3 of the *Act*.
- **“Client”** means the individual receiving professional services and in the case of an individual who is a minor or not capable, the legal guardian or legal representative.
- **“Communication Disorder”** means any disorder and/or delay within the scope of professional competence for an audiologist and/or a speech-language pathologist including but not limited to the following: speech disorders, language disorders, hearing impairment, vertigo, tinnitus, swallowing, reading and writing and cognitive disorders.
- **“Conflict of Interest”** means any real, perceived or potential benefit, advantage, economic reward or gift that could potentially compromise the professional integrity, professional independence, or influence/compromise the professional services.
- **“Extenuating or Special Circumstances”** means the provision of services by a CSASK member to a client who is an immediate family member in emergency situations where another audiologist or speech-language pathologist is not readily available. For example, a child who requires fluency therapy and his/her parent is employed as the only speech-language pathologist in the school division or a member’s sibling requires a hearing assessment and the member is the only audiologist in the community. There should be no fee charged for services rendered.



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- **“Harassment”** means any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a member that constitutes a threat to the health or safety of a client or colleague, and is either:
 - based on race, creed, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, physical size or weight, age, nationality, ancestry or place of origin; or
 - affects adversely the client or colleague’s psychological or physical well-being and that the member knows, or ought reasonably to know, would cause the client or colleague to be humiliated or intimidated.
- **“Immediate Family Member”** means the audiologist’s or the speech-language pathologist’s spouse (includes common-law spouse and same-sex spouse), father, mother, (step)son, (step)daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law.
- **“Impairment”** means any physical, mental, or behavioral disorder that interferes with the member’s ability to engage competently in professional activities.
- **“Informed Consent”** means a client is provided with sufficient information about a proposed service, including benefits and risks, as well as possible alternatives, in a manner that is understandable to the client so that the client is able to make an informed choice regarding intervention. Informed consent may be either verbal or written unless otherwise required by law and/or institutional regulation. The client can withdraw informed consent at any time.
- **“Member”** means an Audiologist or Speech-Language Pathologist who is licensed and regulated by CSASK.
- **“Professional Competence”** means the ongoing ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgement required to provide effective and ethical speech-language pathology and/or audiology services within a designated area of practice.
- **“Services”** means direct, indirect and follow-up activities related to the screening, assessment and/or intervention of clients.
- **“Student”** means an individual enrolled in a recognized program of study in audiology or speech-language pathology.
- **“Supportive Personnel”** means an individual who provides services under the direct supervision of an audiologist and/or speech-language pathologist. This excludes students, teachers, volunteers and family members.
- **“Telepractice”** means the use of technology to deliver audiology and/or speech-language pathology services at a distance.



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Values

CSASK members hold the following values:

Integrity

Members recognize and adhere to the principles of truth, accountability, objectivity, and accuracy in all of their activities.

Professionalism

Members support and enhance the reputation of their profession by participating in and accepting the self-regulation of their profession, honouring contractual agreements, complying with Provincial laws and delivering safe, ethical, quality service.

Caring and Respect

Members value the well being of others. The welfare and dignity of those served professionally is paramount. The provision of professional services takes priority over personal interests, aims and opinions. Members demonstrate respect, compassion, and confidentiality in their interactions with others. Members accept and respect differing perspectives and seek to understand differing cultural beliefs that affect their professional services.

High Standards and Continuing Competency

Members practise within their scope of competence and seek to enhance and maintain their professional skills through continuing education. Members strive to provide professional services and information supported by current scientific and professional research.

Accountability

Members take responsibility for their actions and decisions and have a duty to report other service providers who provide incompetent and/or unethical services to the appropriate authority. When reporting concerns regarding the conduct or clinical competence of other service providers, do so in an open, fair and respectful manner, including consultation with the service provider to ensure one has the relevant facts.



Ethical Principles

1. Professional Competence

Members shall:

- a) meet registration requirements and hold provincial registration. Members who engage in clinical practice must be a practising member in good standing with CSASK.
- b) engage only in the provision of services that fall within their professional competence, considering their level of education, training and experience.
- c) be vigilant in avoiding activities that may be construed as a conflict of interest.
- d) endorse students or supportive personnel for completion of academic training, certification, and provide endorsement for employment only if they demonstrate the required competencies and expected ethical practices.
- e) cooperate with the CSASK Council and Staff regarding instances of alleged violation of this Code, CSASK By-Laws or policies by:
 - understanding the application of the ethical and practice standards of the profession.
 - cooperating with any committee authorized by CSASK to investigate or act upon an alleged violation.
 - refraining from activities that advocate, sanction, participate in or condone any act that is in violation of this Code, CSASK By-Laws or policies.
 - reporting suspected violations of the Code to the Executive Director of CSASK.

2. Continuing Education

Members shall:

- a) strive to maintain and enhance their professional competence throughout their careers.
- b) engage in continuing education in their profession to ensure their ongoing competence in those areas of practice in which they are already involved.
- c) pursue education in those subject areas in which their knowledge and practical experience is limited or dated.
- d) as a minimum, meet the CSASK continuing education guidelines for maintenance of a license to practise as a member of CSASK.

3. Limitations on Practice

Members shall:

- a) recognize their limitations and restrict their practice in order to practise without impairment (e.g., withdraw from practice if a physical or mental condition compromises their professional competence.).
- b) where indicated seek advice from, and/or refer clients to, another qualified colleague for diagnostic or intervention services.



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4. Delegation

Members shall:

- a) be responsible for all professional services they delegate to supportive personnel and students under their supervision.
- b) not misrepresent the credentials of supportive personnel or students and shall inform the client of the professional credentials of any personnel providing services to the client.

5. Information for the Client

Members shall:

- a) provide information to the client regarding the nature of the client's communication disorder as well as the appropriate service and intervention options.
- b) provide accurate and truthful information in a manner that is understandable to the client.

6. Informed Consent

Members shall:

- a) obtain informed consent from the client before screening, assessment or intervention.
- b) inform the client that he/she has the right to refuse consent or withdraw consent once given.
- c) obtain written consent from the client before sharing the client's information with third parties, unless the member is required to do otherwise by law.
- d) obtain written consent from the client prior to using case material, case records, or audio-visual material in teaching or in mass media communication. Where possible and appropriate, members shall eliminate identifying client information from the material that is shared in such situations.
- e) when dealing with children, obtain informed consent from the child's legal custodian (two parents, sometimes one parent, or as directed in a court order) for the service being provided unless the child is legal age of consent.
- f) if diminished decision making of persons served is suspected, members shall seek appropriate authorization for services, such as authorization from a spouse, other family member, or legally authorized/appointed representative.

7. Discrimination

Members shall:

- a) not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, colour, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, physical size or weight, age, nationality, ancestry or place of origin in their professional relationships with their colleagues or with clients.
- b) limit their practice to areas that fall within their professional competence.



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8. Harassment

Members shall not condone nor engage in harassment of clients or colleagues.

9. Resources

Members shall:

- a) access and use available resources conscientiously and prudently in the pursuit of quality client care.
- b) utilize resources that they and the client deem appropriate. This includes recommending and/or making referrals to other persons and agencies whose knowledge and services may contribute to the diagnosis, assessment and/or intervention of clients.
- c) promptly provide the client with information regarding other appropriate sources of assistance if unable to assess or provide the necessary services or if wait time may jeopardize client care.

10. Telepractice

Members shall ensure that the standards of service delivered via telepractice are equivalent to the standards expected in traditional delivery methods and are delivered in accordance with CSASK telepractice preferred practice guidelines, Bylaws and *The Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Act*. Members shall use evidence-based decision-making to choose the most appropriate service delivery model for a particular condition and/or client.

11. Safety

Members shall:

- a) take every precaution to avoid harm to the client and themselves. This includes following applicable health and safety practices and ensuring that equipment is appropriately calibrated and in proper working order.
- b) use appropriate channels, in a timely manner, to address errors and/or issues of concern which may have an impact on the wellbeing of clients, other service providers, and themselves during the provision of services.

12. Records

Members shall:

- a) prepare and maintain adequate records of professional services provided, and products dispensed, in a timely fashion.
- b) allow clients to access their own records.
- c) allow third-party access to client records when written authorization is obtained from the client or where required to provide access by law.
- d) abide by relevant privacy and consent legislation regarding documentation.



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- e) maintain and dispose of records according to the time period determined by privacy legislation and/or organizational policies and if none exist, applicable regulatory standards.

13. Privacy

Members shall be familiar and comply with all applicable provincial and federal privacy legislation.

14. Public Statements

Members shall ensure that any public statements they make regarding speech-language pathology and/or audiology are not misleading. Their spoken, written or printed communications shall be true, accurate and clear in representing their qualifications, education, experience and competence.

15. Advertising/Social Media

Members shall:

- a) have the option to advertise their professional services.
- b) not advertise in a way that is false, misleads the public, misrepresents the professions, or disparages the skills of other members or other professions.
- c) abide by applicable regulatory policies regarding advertising and social documents.

16. Best Business Practices

Members shall:

- a) ensure that their promotion(s), sales and fees for products and/or services for clients are appropriate and fair.
- b) disclose prior to providing any services or products, the fees, charges and billing arrangements that will apply, and obtain the client's agreement.

Members shall not:

- c) provide unnecessary or futile services/products where benefit or continued benefit cannot be reasonably expected. This does not preclude a member from providing a period of trial therapy or product trial to determine if benefit could occur.
- d) guarantee the results of services or products directly, or by implication. This does not rule out members providing a reasonable statement of prognosis, nor does it rule out manufacturers providing a product guarantee.
- e) submit a false or misleading account or charge for a service or product provided to a client.

17. Conflict of Interest

Members shall be vigilant in avoiding situations that may be construed as a conflict of interest. Such situations include, but are not limited to:

- a) using information gained in their place of employment to refer a client to their own



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- private practice or to another member within the member's own private practice.
- b) putting the member's personal interest, goals and/or opinions ahead of the welfare and dignity of the client.
- c) Treating immediate family members (except in extenuating or special circumstances when another audiologist or speech-language pathologist is not readily available).
- d) abide by applicable regulatory policies regarding Conflicts of Interest.

18. Research

Members shall:

- a) use protocols that are in compliance with standards accepted by the scientific community by:
 - obtaining approval where required for research projects, including studies, that follow the relevant national, provincial or institutional protocols.
 - obtaining informed consent from research subjects prior to their participation in research studies and respecting the subject's right to withdraw from studies.
 - ensuring the confidentiality of research participants and obtaining informed consent or refusal prior to releasing any identifying information.
 - ensuring that participation in research augments rather than delays or interferes with scientifically accepted methods of diagnosis or treatment.
 - using peer review processes to evaluate research before presentation to the public.
- b) acknowledge the contributions of other professionals when referencing work or contributions in research, presentations or products.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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