

CODE OF ETHICS of the International Hearing Society

FORWARD

This Code of Ethics for Hearing Instrument Specialists has been prepared and subscribed to by members of the International Hearing Society. These principles of professional conduct are a voluntary effort to provide the best service for the hearing impaired and to guide hearing health professionals in their relations with each other and the public in general.

PREAMBLE

This is a Code of Ethics for those engaged in the testing of human hearing, and in the selection, counseling, fitting, dispensing and servicing of hearing instruments. This Code sets standards of professional integrity and practice, including relationships with patients/clients, colleagues and the general public.

Ethical principles are standards by which the profession and the individual hearing aid specialist determines the propriety of their conduct. Adherence to these standards is required for membership in the International Hearing Society. Adherence to these standards is required for membership in the International Hearing Society, and further serves to assure public confidence in the integrity of the services of hearing aid specialists in this profession. The International Hearing Society verifies the competence of its members through a qualification program and mandatory continuing education. It is incumbent on all hearing health professionals to abide by all laws, or rules and regulations applicable to the dispensing of hearing instruments.

The basic principle is an accepted Code of Ethical Conduct for hearing aid specialists and dispensers of hearing instruments.

In order that we can best serve hearing impaired persons and contribute toward their participation in the world of sound and speech, we, the members of the International Hearing Society, pledge ourselves to abide with this Code of Ethics:

- (A) We shall state only the true facts in our public announcements and advertising of hearing aids and related products, and we shall not, in any way, mislead or misrepresent in regard to their performance, appearance, benefits, element, and use.
- (B) We shall provide thorough and ethical consulting services when we dispense instruments, including the appropriate testing and fitting suitable for the patient/client's particular type of hearing loss.
- (C) We shall, at all times, provide the best possible service to the hearing impaired, offering counsel, understanding and technical assistance contributing toward their deriving the maximum benefit from their hearing instruments.

- (D) We shall constantly encourage and support research, cooperating with medical and other hearing health professionals and societies to employ the maximum accumulation of scientific knowledge and technical skills in the testing of human hearing for the selection, fitting and maintenance of hearing instruments.

SECTION 1: CONDUCT AND RELATIONSHIP WITH PATIENT/CLIENT

Hearing Instrument Specialists engaged in the practice of testing human hearing, and in the selection, counseling, fitting, dispensing and servicing of hearing instruments, shall hold paramount the welfare of the patient/client.

A. Continuing Education

It is in the best interest of the patient/client that the Hearing Instrument Specialist engage and participate in continuing education during each year of active practice.

B. Referral

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall utilize all resources available, including referral to other specialists as needed.

C. Services Rendered

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall accept and seek full responsibility for the exercise of judgement within the areas of his expertise. These services include the testing of human hearing, and the selection, counseling, fitting, dispensing and servicing of hearing instruments.

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall not guarantee outstanding results from the use of hearing instruments, products, services or counseling when such is not the case. He shall exercise caution not to mislead persons to expect results that cannot be predicted.

D. Confidential Aspects of Patient/Client Relations

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall hold in professional confidence all information and professional records concerning a patient/client and use such data only for the benefit of the patient/client or as the law demands.

E. Conduct in Regard to Colleagues and hearing health Care Professions

The Hearing Instrument Specialist must keep the welfare of the patient/client uppermost at all times. He shall avoid personal invective directed toward professional colleagues or members of the hearing health care professions. He shall conduct himself at all times in a manner which will enhance the status of the profession. He shall be supportive to individuals and organizations with whom he is associated to their mutual benefit. He shall not agree to practice under terms or conditions which tend to interfere with or impair the proper exercise of his professional judgement and skill, which tend to cause a

deterioration of the quality of his service, or which require him to consent to unethical conduct.

F. Maintenance of Records

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall initiate and maintain records of services provided to patient/clients. All laws, or rules and regulations pertaining to keeping of records must be carefully observed.

G. Fees and Compensation

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall not participate with other health professionals or any other person in agreements to divide fees or to cause financial or other exploitation when rendering his professional services.

H. Delay in Providing Services

The Hearing Instrument specialist shall not delay furnishing care to patients/clients served professionally, without just cause.

I. Discontinuance of Services

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall not discontinue services to patients/clients without providing reasonable notice of withdrawal, providing all contractual agreements have been satisfied.

SECTION II: RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION AND COLLEAGUES

The Hearing Instrument Specialist has the duty to observe all laws, rules and regulations, applicable to the dispensing of hearing instrument, to uphold the dignity and honor of the profession and to accept its ethical principles. He shall not engage in any activity that will bring discredit to the profession and shall expose, without fear of favor, illegal or unethical conduct in the profession.

- A. In the event it appears that a Hearing Instrument Specialist is in violation of this Code, fellow Hearing Instrument Specialists are encouraged to report circumstances to the Ethics Committee of the International Hearing Society.
- B. The Hearing Instrument Specialist holding an official or elective position in the International Hearing Society or State or Provincial Chapter, shall not use such a position for self-aggrandizement.

SECTION III: ADVERTISING

The Hearing Instrument Specialist who chooses to advertise his services shall use only material considered ethical and complying with laws, or rules and regulations governing advertising.

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall endorse the following statement of principles that assures protection of the hearing impaired and the public in general.

TRUTH – Advertising shall tell the truth, and shall reveal significant facts, the concealment of which would mislead the public, and shall not dispense any product, or part hereof, representing that it is new, unused, or rebuilt, when such is not the fact.

RESPONSIBILITY – Advertisers shall be willing and able to provide substantiation of claims made.

TASTE AND DECENCY – Advertising shall be free of statements, illustrations, or implications which are offensive to good taste or public decency.

DISPARAGEMENT – Advertising shall offer merchandise or service on its merits, and shall refrain from attacking competitors or disparaging their products, services or methods of doing business.

BAIT ADVERTISEMENT – Advertising shall offer only merchandise or services which are readily available for purchase during the advertised period at the advertised price: e.g., it is unethical for any Hearing Instrument Specialist to advertise a particular model or kind of instrument to obtain prospects for the sale of a different model or kind of instrument than that advertised, or to imply a relationship with a manufacturer and trade names that does not exist.

GUARANTEES AND WARRANTIES – Advertising of guarantees and warranties shall be explicit. Advertising of any guarantee or warranty shall clearly and conspicuously disclose its nature and extent, the manner in which the guarantor or warrantor will perform, and the identity of the guarantor or warrantor. It is unethical to use or cause to be used, and guarantee or warranty which is false, misleading, deceptive, or unfair, whether in respect to the quality, construction, serviceability, performance, or method of manufacture of any industry product, or in respect to the terms and conditions of refund of purchase price thereof, or in any other respect.

SECTION IV: STANDARDS

Maintenance of high standards by all Hearing Instrument Specialist is in the best interest of persons served professionally, Hearing Instrument Specialists and the profession.

- A. It shall be unethical for Hearing Instrument Specialist to willfully and knowingly violate any laws or rule or regulation applicable to the dispensing of hearing instruments.
- B. It shall be unethical to use such terms or to use any abbreviation of such terms as doctor, physician, otologist, Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist, certified hearing aid audiologist, clinical audiologist, medical audiologist, research audiologist, industrial audiologist, when such is not the fact.
- C. It shall be unethical to use any symbol or depiction which connotes the medical profession.
- D. It shall be unethical to use any terms that may reasonable be said to confuse the public that a private business practice has some relationship to a governmental or non-profit medical, educational or research institution.

SECTION V: DISCRIMINATION

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall not discriminate in the delivery of professional services on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, age, or marital status.

SECTION VI: ASSOCIATION

The Hearing Instrument Specialist shall associate with groups and organizations having for their objectives the betterment of the profession. Hearing Instrument Specialists shall contribute of their time and funds to further the work of those organizations and the profession.

<p>All members of the International Hearing Society and Hearing Instrument Specialists of this profession pledge themselves to observe and support this Code of Ethics. By violating any part, a member of the International Hearing Society is subject to removal from membership in the International Hearing Society. This Code is interpreted by the Ethics Committee, and enforced by the Grievance Committee of the International Hearing Society. Upon violation of this Code, the Grievance Committee may discipline members, after investigation and hearing.</p>
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