



**International Pharmaceutical Federation  
Fédération internationale pharmaceutique**

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## **FIP STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS CODES OF ETHICS FOR PHARMACISTS**

### **Introduction**

A profession is identified by the willingness of individual practitioners to comply with ethical and professional standards, which exceed minimum legal requirements.

The pharmacist continues to be the health professional who is the expert on medicines. Pharmacists are also given the responsibility to help people to maintain good health, to avoid ill health and, where medication is appropriate, to promote the rational use of medicines and to assist patients to acquire, and gain maximum therapeutic benefit from, their medicines. The role of the pharmacist is continuing to develop.

Recognising these circumstances, this statement of professional standards relating to codes of ethics for pharmacists is intended to reaffirm and state publicly, the obligations that form the basis of the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists. These obligations, based on moral principles and values, are provided to enable national associations of pharmacists, through their individual codes of ethics, to guide pharmacists in their relationships with patients, other health professionals and society generally.

Against this background, and for this purpose, the FIP **recommends** that

1. In every country, the appropriate association of pharmacists should produce a Code of Ethics for pharmacists setting out their professional obligations and take steps to ensure that pharmacists comply with the provisions of that Code.
2. The obligations of pharmacists set out in these codes should include
  - to act with fairness and equity in the allocation of any health resources made available to them.
  - to ensure that their priorities are the safety, well being and best interests of those to whom they provide professional services and that they act at all times with integrity in their dealings with them.
  - to collaborate with other health professionals to ensure that the best possible quality of healthcare is provided both to individuals and the community at large.
  - to respect the rights of individual patients to participate in decisions about their treatment with medicinal products and to encourage them to do so.<sup>1</sup>
  - to recognise and respect the cultural differences, beliefs and values of patients, particularly as they may affect a patient's attitude to suggested treatment.

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- to respect and protect the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of providing professional services and ensure that information about an individual is not disclosed to others except with the informed consent of that individual or in specified exceptional circumstances.<sup>2</sup>
  - to act in accordance with professional standards and scientific principles.
  - to act with honesty and integrity in their relationships with other health professionals, including pharmacist colleagues, and not engage in any behaviour or activity likely to bring the profession into disrepute or undermine public confidence in the profession.
  - to ensure that they keep their knowledge and professional skills up-to-date through continuing professional development.<sup>3</sup>
  - to comply with legislation and accepted codes and standards of practice in the provision of all professional services and pharmaceutical products and ensure the integrity of the supply chain for medicines by purchasing only from reputable sources.<sup>4 5</sup>
  - to ensure that members of support staff to whom tasks are delegated have the competencies necessary for the efficient and effective undertaking of these tasks.
  - to ensure that all information provided to patients, other members of the public and other health professionals is accurate and objective, and is given in a manner designed to ensure that it is understood.
  - to treat all those who seek their services with courtesy and respect.
  - to ensure the continuity of provision of professional services in the event of conflict with personal moral beliefs or closure of a pharmacy. In the event of labour disputes, to make every effort to ensure that people continue to have access to pharmaceutical services.

**This Statement replaces that adopted by the Council of FIP in 1997.**

**References:**

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<sup>1</sup> FIP Statement of Professional Standards on the Role of the Pharmacist in Encouraging Adherence to Long-Term Treatments (Sydney 2003)

<sup>2</sup> FIP Statement of Policy on Confidentiality of Information gained in the course of Pharmacy Practice (2004, New Orleans)

<sup>3</sup> FIP Statement of Professional Standards on Continuing Professional Development (2002, Nice)

<sup>4</sup> The Tokyo Declaration (1993) Standards for quality of pharmacy services (FIP Guidelines for Good Pharmacy Practice, September 1993) and revised version FIP/WHO GPP (1997, Vancouver)

<sup>5</sup> FIP Statement of Policy on Counterfeit Medicines (2003, Sydney)