

Code of Ethics for Community Pharmacists

Dr. Ayesha Fatima

Pharm D

Assistant Professor

Dept of Pharmacy Practice

Ethics: Ethics are defined as 'The code of moral Principles' or 'The science of the moral.' They represent the science of moral duties towards society and are associated with every profession, including health-related professions and engineering.

Pharmaceutical Ethics: Pharmaceutical ethics refers specifically to the ethical principles and standards that apply to the pharmacy profession.

Morality: Morality signifies good conduct or behavior and consciousness.

Law: Law is defined as the rules of human conduct that are binding on all persons within a state or nation.

Code: The written document that contains a set of principles, values, and standards intended to guide the behavior and decision-making of an individual, group, or organization.

This code sets expectations for ethical conduct, promoting honesty, integrity, and fairness in professional settings, and helps professionals navigate complex ethical dilemmas.

Code of Ethics: a set of standards, rules, guidelines and values that govern the profession.

Code of Pharmaceutical Ethics: Pharmacy code of ethics can be defined as, "principles, obligations, values, standards or rules of behaviour, that guide a Pharmacist to follow procedures, to take decisions and adopt systems in a way that leads to the welfare of its key stakeholders (Patient or consumers), and respects the rights of all those who are involved directly or indirectly in the health care".

The Code of Pharmaceutical Ethics is formulated by the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) to guide Indian pharmacists on how they should conduct themselves in relation to:

- Their job and trade
- Their profession (pharmacy) and the medical profession

Professional standards for Indian Pharmacists

- Pharmacy profession is a noble profession as it safeguards the health of the public in concert with medical practitioners.
- As per the pharmacy act 1948, only qualified and registered Pharmacists are experts to practice pharmacy.
- Code of ethics are formulated by Pharmacy Council of India which are meant to guide the Pharmacists as to how they should conduct themselves in relation with patrons (employers), general public, co professionals and the patients.
- Pharmacy council of India framed the following ethics for Indian Pharmacists in relation to the job, trade, medical profession and the profession.

Pharmacist in Relation to his Job

- Pharmaceutical services
- Conduct of the Pharmacy
- Handling of Prescriptions
- Handling of Drugs
- Apprentice Pharmacist

Pharmacist in Relation To His Trade

- Fair Trade Practice
- Purchase of Drugs
- Hawking of Drugs
- Advertising and Displays

Pharmacist In Relation To Medical Profession

- Limitation Of professional Activity
- Clandestine Arrangements
- Liaison with public

Pharmacist in Relation To his Profession

- Professional Vigilance
- Law-abiding Citizens
- Relationship with professional Organisations
- Decorum and Propriety

1. Pharmacist in Relation to the Job

A Pharmacist should keep the following in relation to the job

1. Pharmaceutical services:

- Pharmacy profession (medical shops) should be registered.
- Emergency medication and common medicines should be supplied to the patients without any delay.

2. Conduct of pharmacy:

- Error of accidental contamination in the preparation, dispensing and supply of medicines should be checked in the pharmacy.

3. Handling of prescription:

- A Pharmacist should receive a prescription without any comments on it that may cause anxiety to the patient.
- No part of the prescription should be changed without consent of the prescriber.
- In case of any change is required, the prescription should be referred back to the prescriber.

4. Handling of drugs:

- A prescription should always be dispensed correctly and carefully with standard quality drugs.
- Drugs that have abusive potential should not be supplied to any one without a valid prescription.

5. Apprentice pharmacist:

- Experienced Pharmacist should provide all the facilities and practical training of the trainee pharmacists.
- Certificate should be issued only to such trainees who have completed all the requirements.

2. Pharmacist in Relation to Trade

Following are the provisions which the pharmacist should keep in mind while dealing with the trade activities.

(a) Price structure: The prices charged should be fair keeping with the quality, quantity and labor or skill required.

(b) Fair trade practice: Fair practice should be adopted by a pharmacist in the trade without any attempt to capture other pharmacist business.

(c) Purchase of drugs: Pharmacists should buy drugs from genuine and reputed sources.

(d) Advertising and display: The sale of medicines or medical appliances or display of materials in undignified style on the premises, in the press or elsewhere is prohibited.

3. Pharmacist in Relation to Medical Profession

(a) Limitation of professional activity:

- The professional activity of the medical practitioner as well as the pharmacists should be confined to their own field only.
- Medical practitioners should not possess drug stores and pharmacist should not diagnose and prescribe.
- However pharmacists can offer a first aid in the pharmacy in case of an emergency

(b) Clandestine arrangements: (Secretively)

- A Pharmacist should not enter into a secret arrangement or contract with a physician by offering him any commission or any advantage.

(c) Liaison with the public:

- A Pharmacist should always maintain proper link between physician and people.
- He should advise the physician on pharmaceutical matters and should educate the people regarding the health and hygiene.
- The Pharmacist should be keeping himself/ herself up to date with pharmaceutical knowledge from various journals and publications.
- Any information acquired by a pharmacist during his professional activities should not be disclosed to any third party until or unless required to do by law.

4. Pharmacist in Relation to the Profession

Regarding to the profession, the following code of ethics should be fulfilled

(a) Professional vigilance: A Pharmacist must abide by the pharmaceutical laws and encourage other fellow pharmacists to follow them

(b) Law abiding citizens: The Pharmacists should have fair knowledge of the laws of the country pertaining to food, drugs, pharmacies, health and sanitation etc.

(c) Relationship with professional organizations: A Pharmacist should be involved in professional activities and try to improve the image of the organization.

(d) Decorum and propriety: A Pharmacist should not indulge in doing anything that goes against the decorum and propriety of pharmacy profession.

Pharmacist's Oath

(As approved by the Pharmacy Council of India)

- I swear by the Code of Ethics of Pharmacy Council of India in relation to the community and shall act as an integral part of health care team.
- I shall uphold the laws and standards governing my profession.
- I shall strive to perfect and enlarge my knowledge to contribute to the advancement of pharmacy and public health.
- I shall follow the system which I consider best for pharmaceutical care and counseling of patients.

- I shall endeavour to discover and manufacture drugs of quality to alleviate sufferings of humanity.
- I shall hold in confidence the knowledge gained about the patients in connection with my professional practice and never divulge unless compelled to do so by the law.
- I shall associate with organizations having their objectives for betterment of the Profession of Pharmacy and make contribution to carry out the work of those organizations.
- While I continue to keep this oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of Pharmacy respected by all, at all times!
- Should I trespass and violate this oath, may the reverse be my lot!

**AMERICAN
CODE OF
PHARMACEUTICAL ETHICS**

Preamble

- Pharmacists are health care professionals who help the patients to use the medications appropriately.
- Code, prepared and supported by pharmacists is intended to state publicly the principles that form the fundamental basis of the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists.
- These principles, based on moral obligations and virtues, are established to guide pharmacists in relationships with patients, other health care professionals, and the society.

1. A pharmacist respects the covenantal relationship between the patient and pharmacist
2. A pharmacist promotes the good of every patient in a caring, compassionate, and confidential manner
3. A pharmacist respects the autonomy and dignity of each patient
4. A pharmacist acts with honesty and integrity in professional relationships
5. A pharmacist maintains professional competence
6. A pharmacist respects the values and abilities of colleagues and other health professionals
7. A pharmacist serves individual, community, and societal needs
8. A pharmacist seeks justice in the distribution of health resources

(1) A pharmacist respects the covenantal relationship between the patient and pharmacist:

- Considering the patient-pharmacist relationship as a covenant means that a pharmacist has moral obligations in response to the gift of trust received from the society.
- In return for this gift, a pharmacist promises to help individuals to achieve optimum benefit from their medications, to be committed to their welfare, and to maintain their trust.

(ii) A pharmacist promotes the good of every patient in a caring, compassionate, and confidential manner:

- A pharmacist places concern for the well-being of the patient at the center of professional practice.
- In doing so, a pharmacist considers needs stated by the patient as well as those defined by health science.
- A pharmacist is dedicated to protect the dignity of the patient. With a caring attitude and a compassionate spirit, a pharmacist focuses on serving the patient in a private and confidential manner.

(iii) A pharmacist respects the autonomy and dignity of each patient:⁹

- A pharmacist promotes the right of self-determination and recognizes individual self-worth by encouraging patients to participate in decisions about their health.
- A pharmacist communicates with patients in terms that are understandable.
- In all cases, a pharmacist respects personal and cultural differences among patients.

(iv) A pharmacist acts with honesty and integrity in professional relationships:

- A pharmacist has a duty to tell the truth and to act with conviction of conscience.
- A pharmacist avoids discriminatory practices, behavior or work conditions that impair professional judgment, and actions that compromise dedication to the best interests of bot patients.

(v) A pharmacist maintains professional competence:

- A pharmacist has a duty to maintain knowledge and abilities as new medications, devices, and technologies become available and as health information advances.

(vi) A pharmacist respects the values and abilities of colleagues and other health professionals:

- When appropriate, a pharmacist asks for the consultation of colleagues or other health care professionals or refers the patient.
- A pharmacist acknowledges that colleagues and other health care professionals may differ in the beliefs and values they apply to the care of the patient.

(vii) A pharmacist serves individual, community, and societal needs:

- The primary obligation of a pharmacist is to individual patients.
- However, the obligations of a pharmacist may at times extend beyond the individual to the community and the society.
- In these situations, the pharmacist recognizes the responsibilities that accompany these obligations and acts accordingly.

(viii) A pharmacist seeks justice in the distribution of health resources:

- When health resources are allocated, a pharmacist is fair and equitable, balancing the needs of patients and the society.