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CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

**FOR THE GUIDANCE OF REGISTERED PHARMACISTS
IN HONG KONG**

PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD OF HONG KONG

(XXX 2016)

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1 INTRODUCTION

Pharmacists are healthcare professionals who provide patient-centered care to enable patients and the public to maintain good health and high quality of life through use of medications in a responsible, safe and effective manner.

This Code, prepared and supported by registered pharmacists, aims to provide guiding principles on the roles and responsibilities of registered pharmacists and to provide guidance to the profession in respect of the relationship between a registered pharmacist and his/her stakeholders including patients, health professionals, and the society at large. This Code has been endorsed by the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong (“the Board”) which is responsible for the registration of and taking disciplinary actions against pharmacists under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138).

All registered pharmacists are advised to study this Code carefully to avoid the risk of inadvertently transgressing this Code which may otherwise lead to disciplinary action by the Board.

The question of whether a particular course of conduct amounts to unprofessional conduct and the gravity of the unprofessional conduct or conviction that gives rise to a disciplinary inquiry are matters which the Board will have to determine in each individual disciplinary case on its own facts. The Board, owing to its quasi-judicial function, is not able to advise individuals in respect of these matters. Persons who require advice on these matters are advised to consult their professional associations, senior colleagues of the profession or their lawyers.

2 PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

2.1 Relationship with the General Public and Patients

- 2.1.1 A registered pharmacist should take the care, well-being and safety of the patients and the public as the first concern in his/her practice.
- 2.1.2 A registered pharmacist should make use of the resources available and utilize his/her professional knowledge to provide support to patients and the public on the safe and appropriate use of pharmaceutical products.
- 2.1.3 A registered pharmacist shall not supply any pharmaceutical product which, he/she knows or has reason to believe, is intended to be used in a manner that would be detrimental to health.
- 2.1.4 A registered pharmacist should provide accurate, factual, relevant and independent information which is appropriate for and not misleading to patients and the public.
- 2.1.5 The professional judgment of a registered pharmacist shall be free of bias and discrimination and shall not be affected by personal or organizational interests.
- 2.1.6 A registered pharmacist should share the responsibility in promoting the health and well-being of the community.

2.2 Relationship with the Pharmacy Profession and Fellow Pharmacists

- 2.2.1 A registered pharmacist should uphold the honour and reputation of the pharmacy profession and act with honesty and integrity to maintain public trust and confidence in the pharmacy profession.
- 2.2.2 A registered pharmacist should maintain a high standard of professional conduct and always exercise his/her professional judgment in his/her practice.
- 2.2.3 A registered pharmacist should strive to provide and maintain pharmacy services at a high standard of professional competence.
- 2.2.4 A registered pharmacist is encouraged to keep abreast of the progress of relevant professional knowledge and skills so as to maintain a high standard of professional competence.
- 2.2.5 A registered pharmacist should keep him/herself up-to-date and shall comply with the laws that govern practice relating to his/her professional duties.
- 2.2.6 A registered pharmacist should share his/her knowledge, experience and skills to nurture future and new members of the profession.
- 2.2.7 A registered pharmacist may, when considered necessary, delegate to the person who has the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills his/her duties to provide patient care.
- 2.2.8 A registered pharmacist shall ensure that his/her professional capacity, if referred to in the promotion of any

products or services, will be referred to in such a manner that does not mislead the public.

- 2.2.9 A registered pharmacist shall not use unsubstantiated title in carrying out his/her professional duties.

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2.3 Relationship with Members of other Healthcare Professionals

- 2.3.1 A registered pharmacist should collaborate and communicate with other healthcare professionals effectively to optimise patient care.
- 2.3.2 Information related to pharmaceutical products provided by a registered pharmacist to other healthcare professionals should be unbiased and evidence-based.
- 2.3.3 A registered pharmacist should acknowledge and respect the contribution of other healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients and the public.

2.4 Professional Autonomy and Conflict of Interest

- 2.4.1 A registered pharmacist should strive to uphold his/her professional autonomy.
- 2.4.2 A registered pharmacist should, whenever appropriate, declare any personal or professional interests to avoid conflicts of interest. He/she shall not ask for or accept personal benefits that may adversely affect his/her professional judgment.

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2.5 Confidentiality and Privacy

- 2.5.1 A registered pharmacist shall not disclose confidential information without patients' consent, except where he/she is legally permitted to do so for the benefit and interest of patients.
- 2.5.2 A registered pharmacist shall use information obtained in the course of professional practice only for the purposes for which it was given or other purposes which are lawful.
- 2.5.3 A registered pharmacist shall provide the appropriate level of privacy to patients requiring and receiving care from him/her.
- 2.5.4 A registered pharmacist shall take care to protect patients'/clients' anonymity and privacy when patients'/clients' personal information is required for purposes of teaching, research or quality assurance procedures.

3. Examples of Ordinances:

- i. Antibiotics Ordinance (Cap. 137)
- ii. Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549)
- iii. Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134)
- iv. Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138)
- v. Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132)
- vi. Trade Descriptions Ordinance (Cap. 362)
- vii. Undesirable Medical Advertisements Ordinance (Cap. 231)

(Some examples only and the above list is by no means exhaustive)