

## **International Federation of Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapists Inc**

### **CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

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#### **Preamble**

Maintaining a high level of professional conduct and behaviour is an instrumental part of participating in and serving as a member of any Committee, Working Group, or Advisory Group of IFOMPT (IFOMPT representatives). The purpose of this document is:

- to define the expected behaviour and characteristics that IFOMPT representatives should uphold in their involvement with IFOMPT and its business;
- to outline what is regarded as unacceptable behaviour; and
- to provide guidelines for enforcement of the code of conduct for alleged violations.

These should be read together with the corresponding code of conduct documents of the Member Organisations, Registered Interest Groups, Parent Professional Organisations, and World Confederation for Physical Therapy. To demonstrate the commitment to this Code, representatives of IFOMPT will note the provisions contained in this document and consent in writing to the provisions of the IFOMPT Code of Conduct.

#### **1. Duties and Responsibilities of IFOMPT Representatives**

IFOMPT representatives agree to carry out their IFOMPT involvement and responsibilities as prescribed in the Constitution, policy documents, and Governance Manual of IFOMPT to the best of their ability and in the best interest of IFOMPT including, but not limited to:

- a) Being independent and impartial in conducting IFOMPT business;
- b) Not allowing his/her conduct to be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, or the expectation of reward;
- c) Acting with honesty, integrity, transparency, and loyalty to IFOMPT to maintain a high degree of confidence; and
- d) Exercising vigilance for and declaring any actual or perceived misconduct or breach of confidentiality or conflict of interest in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

An IFOMPT representative shall not directly or indirectly offer or accept cash payments, gratuities or privileges which are intended (or may be perceived to be intended) to influence the activities or affairs of IFOMPT. If, for whatever reason, a representative does receive a **gift** as part of their IFOMPT activities that will not influence the affairs of IFOMPT (e.g., as a token of appreciation when representing IFOMPT at an event), such gifts must be declared to IFOMPT.

#### **2. Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information**

IFOMPT representatives agree:

- a) That in carrying out their IFOMPT duties they have an obligation to keep all of the information in the strictest confidence, and not to disclose any of this information to any third parties, nor to use any of the information for any purpose other than IFOMPT business and membership activities.
- b) To avoid disclosure to third parties of all confidential and/or proprietary information that has, or could potentially have value in the activities, educational programmes, business or prospective business and/or activities of IFOMPT, and that if disclosed to third parties, could prejudice the ability of IFOMPT to conduct its business and membership activities successfully;
- c) That they may disclose confidential information to other IFOMPT committee members, employees, consultants, their successors, and other advisors who have a need to know the confidential information, but only to the extent which is necessary to carry out IFOMPT business, programmes, or activities. If there is any uncertainty about whether information can be disclosed or not, clarification should be sought from the IFOMPT Executive Committee.

- d) That, when they are no longer an IFOMPT representative, regardless of the reason for this, such obligation shall expressly survive the termination of their responsibilities with IFOMPT. In addition, IFOMPT confidential information stored on personal computers must be deleted after a copy of the IFOMPT confidential information is submitted to the IFOMPT office.

### **3. Misconduct**

Professional misconduct can be classified as “conduct, behaviour, action, comment, or other such activities that are believed to be:

- a) Detrimental to the best interests and intent of IFOMPT or that bring harm to the standing of the IFOMPT designation/brand, to the educational programmes under IFOMPT monitoring, or to the physical therapy profession;
- b) Detrimental to the professional practice, research, teaching, or business of an educational institute or programme, Member Organisation, or Registered Interest Group of IFOMPT;
- c) Deliberately discriminatory or insensitive to any group or individual regardless of context;
- d) Malicious in withholding confidential information to successors who have a need to know such information to carry out their IFOMPT business or activities;
- e) Unethical, fraudulent, and/or deceitful in business behaviour in one’s professional practice. This may include, but is not limited to fraudulent or dishonest actions perpetrated against IFOMPT, an educational institute/programme, another healthcare professional, or a member of the public;
- f) Unethical, fraudulent, and/or deceitful practices towards an IFOMPT Member Organisation, Registered Interest Group, or individual; and/or
- g) Illegal in nature as defined by either national bodies, Member Organisations, Registered Interest Groups, or as defined by one’s national or professional regulatory organisation”.

### **4. Conflict of Interest**

IFOMPT representatives must act in the best interest of IFOMPT at all times. They must avoid situations where their specific duty as an IFOMPT representative conflicts with their personal or private interests or with their duties to others. When a conflict of interest arises, or appears to arise, Section 5 of this document shall guide IFOMPT representatives in responding to the conflict of interest and maintaining transparency, accountability, and integrity in their particular duties.

- a) A conflict of interest is a circumstance or situation, which is (or may be perceived to be) sufficient to influence a representative from putting other interests ahead of IFOMPT interests.
- b) Generally, a conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational, or financial considerations may presently, or in the reasonably foreseeable future affect (or appear to affect), a representative’s objectivity, judgment, or ability to act in the best interests of IFOMPT.
- c) A conflict of interest may be real or perceived. A “perceived” conflict of interest may exist if a reasonable person would believe there is a conflict of interest even if there is no real conflict.

### **5. Disclosing and Managing Misconduct and/or Conflicts of Interest**

- a) It is the responsibility of any representative who is aware and has evidence of misconduct, a breach of confidentiality or a conflict of interest in their own capacity, or on part of another IFOMPT representative to raise the issue for clarification, first with the representative in question and, if still unresolved, with the Executive Committee.
- b) If the representative is uncertain as to whether misconduct or a breach of confidentiality or a conflict of interest has arisen, the matter shall be brought to the Executive Committee for advice and guidance.

- c) Members must disclose to the Executive Committee all real or perceived misconduct or breach of confidentiality or conflicts of interest immediately upon becoming aware of these and that they have not been able to resolve.
- d) The Executive Committee shall investigate the matter by obtaining information from all parties involved and decide on the best action required based on the facts before them. This could include meeting with the parties involved as well as obtaining any other inputs they require to make a decision on the matter.
- e) Once the Executive Committee has made a decision on the matter, this will be documented in the official confidential record of IFOMPT and the parties involved need to be informed of the outcome.
- f) If the Executive Committee does find that a conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality has arisen, or misconduct has taken place, they have a number of recourses to consider depending on the severity of the case and cooperation and remorse shown by the representative:
  - i) If the actions are believed to be incidental in nature and/or without either malicious intent or clear and deliberate infringement to the Code of Professional Conduct, the Executive Committee will convene a meeting with such representative and discuss the matter and the consequences of the actions and may issue a cautionary or warning to such representative, if deemed appropriate.
  - ii) In cases where actions by an IFOMPT representative are believed to be a clear infringement of the Code of Professional Conduct, the Executive Committee will consider the matter, convene such discussions as deemed necessary to investigate the matter to determine the facts and whether the actions in question will potentially result in longstanding or detrimental consequences to IFOMPT, and decide on a response. That could include a reprimand, written warning, suspension, or termination of any further involvement in IFOMPT business of such individual, based on the facts.
  - iii) In cases where the conduct, behaviour, action, comment, or other such activities by an IFOMPT representative are believed to be repetitive, grievous in nature, clearly violate the Code of Professional Conduct, and/or have longstanding and detrimental consequences to IFOMPT, the Executive Committee has the responsibility to identify and mitigate such an event and can do so by suspending or terminating the involvement of such representative following a thorough investigation of the matter including meeting with all parties concerned.
- g) After discussing with the Executive Committee, if there remains a question or doubt as to the existence of misconduct or breach of confidentiality or a conflict of interest, the matter should be brought to the Delegate Assembly for its consideration by way of a general correspondence or special meeting.
- h) In any situation where a representative of IFOMPT has disclosed misconduct or breach of confidentiality or a conflict of interest, or where the Executive Committee has determined that misconduct or breach of confidentiality or a conflict of interest has occurred, the representatives involved shall strictly abstain from participation in any discussion on the matter in conflict with anybody other than the Executive Committee, shall not attempt to influence the outcome, and shall abstain from any actions or activities relating to the matter.
- i) All such matters will be handled confidentially and with respect and due cognisance of the integrity of the representatives involved.
- j) If one or more members of the Executive Committee is implicated in any form of misconduct as outlined in this document to the extent that a quorum cannot be attained, this shall be evaluated by the immediate past President of IFOMPT who shall act as an independent arbitrator and compliance officer in terms of the provisions of this policy in addressing the alleged misconduct.

**By agreeing to the IFOMPT Code of Professional Conduct**, IFOMPT representatives knowingly agree and permit the Executive Committee of IFOMPT to determine whether conduct and behaviours are credibly deemed as unprofessional based on the definition and provisions provided herein and based upon a thorough review of all accessible information on a given concern.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [Print representative's Name], acknowledge that I have received IFOMPT's Code of Conduct, and that I have reviewed and understand the same, and agree to be bound by its terms.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Representative's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness' Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness' Name (Please Print)