

CROATIAN NURSING COUNCIL

CODE OF ETHICS

Assembly of the Croatian Nurses Council, in exercise of its powers under Article 27 of the Nursing Act ("Narodne novine"; Num. 121/03.) and article 14 of the Statutes of the Croatian Nursing Council (clean copy), hereby makes this Code of Ethics for Nurses.

THE CODE OF ETHICS

I. INTRODUCTION

Article 1

This Code of Ethics for Nurses (hereafter referred to as: Code) regulates the following: key principles of the nursing professional behavior, relationships with patients, cooperation with the nursing care team, confidentiality, continuous professional development, respecting the professional reputation, professional indemnity insurance, modalities of dealing with ethical issues and relationships with other nurses.

II. KEY PRINCIPLES

Article 2

2.1. Nurse performing her/his activity shall join the Croatian Nursing Council, shall enter the Council's Register and have a licence for independent practice in accordance with provisions of law.

2.2. Nurse shall:

- respect a patient as a human being,
- respect and protect patient's right to physical and mental integrity,
- respect patient's personality and privacy,
- respect patient's point of view, moral and religious beliefs,
- seek valid consent before providing any treatment or nursing care,
- keep a professional secret,
- cooperate with other members of a health-care team,
- maintain her/his own professional knowledge and competency,
- be confidential,
- practice in such manner to identify the risk for the patient and to minimize it,
- protect and promote the patients' health,
- maintain and enhance a good reputation of the nursing profession.

2.3. Nurse shall be personally responsible for her/his practice, meaning that nurse shall be accountable for her/his actions and omissions, regardless of the advices or instructions of other professionals.

2.4. Nurse shall take care of patients who have a right to safe and high-quality nursing care.

2.5. Nurse shall abide the law.

III. RELATIONSHIP WITH PATIENTS

Article 3

3.1. Nurse shall recognize and respect the role of a patient as a partner in the nursing care and also patient's contribution to that care.

3.2. Nurse shall obtain personal responsibility within her/his scope of practice in order to promote and protect interests and dignity of patients, regardless of sex, age, race, abilities, sexual orientation, economic status, lifestyle, cultural, religious or political beliefs.

3.3. Nurse shall always keep a professional distinction in relations with the patient. Nurse shall ensure that all aspects of that relationship are concerning only the patients' needs.

3.4. Nurse shall inform, as soon as possible, the responsible or superior person on conscientious objection relevant to nurse's professional practice. In that case nurse is not allowed to discontinue providing nursing care if it could cause permanent consequences for patient's health or could endanger patient's life.

IV. COOPERATION WITH THE TEAM

Article 4

4.1. Nurse shall cooperate with all members of the team and respect the skills and contributions of her/his colleagues. Nurse shall behave fairly and without discriminations.

4.2. Nurse shall achieve efficient communication and share her/his knowledge with other members of the team, which is considered as necessary for the patient's benefit.

4.3. Nursing documentation shall be a communication tool within the team. Nurse is responsible to provide that nursing documentation shall be a precise report on the treatment, planning and administering of the nursing care. Every realized procedure and other information's which have been recorded into the nursing documentation shall be recorded at earliest possible time after provided treatment or after a specific case has

occurred. Nursing documentation shall provide a clear inspection into the planned nursing care, decisions made, results of care and other necessary information.

V. PROFESSIONAL SECRET

Article 5

5.1. Nurse shall regard all information's on patients as confidential and use them only for the specifically determined purpose.

5.2. Nurse shall pay attention that confidentiality is not violated so that she/he always protects confidential information from their inappropriate disposal.

5.3. Nurse may divulge professional secret only in cases determined by the law or with the patient's consent.

VI. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Article 6

6.1. Nurse shall maintain her/his knowledge and skills through all their working life. Nurses shall regularly take part in educational activities which improve their competency and working skills.

6.2. Nurse shall possess knowledge, skills and qualifications required for safe and efficacious nursing practice, so that she/he could competently perform nursing practice

6.3. Nurse shall precisely determine the scope of her/his professional competency and obtain nursing practice in that manner and accept responsibility for activities she/he is trained for.

6.4. If a certain procedure is exceeding the nurse's competency or is beyond the scope of the nurse's practice, she/he shall apply to the competent professionals for help and supervision, and shall not perform that procedure if it could cause direct or indirect damage to the patient.

6.5. Nurse shall provide help to nursing learners and students.

VII. PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION

Article 7

7.1. Nurse shall promote the reputation of the nursing profession by her/his actions.

7.2. Nurse shall avoid the use of professional qualifications in the promotion of commercial products and services in order to accomplish her/his own material interests. Nurse shall not allow that commercial motives affect her/his independent professional judgment.

7.3. Nurse shall not accept any gifts or favors which could be interpreted as an attempt of gaining personal benefits or privileges.

7.4. Nurse shall not ask nor accept a loan from a patient or patient's relatives.

VIII. PROTECTING PATIENTS FROM RISKS

Article 8

8.1. Nurse shall cooperate with other members of a team in order to advance nursing care which would contribute to safe, therapeutically and ethical practice.

8.2. Nurse shall inform her/his authorities in a written form if circumstances where she/he can not eliminate the consequences that could endanger the professional standards occur.

8.3. Head nurse and a nursing care team leader have a special responsibility for patients and colleagues.

If a professional dilemma occurs, nurses' main priorities are interests and safety of patients.

8.4. In the cases of emergency, nurse, whether she/he is on or off duty, shall provide first aid and help having in mind her/his own competency.

IX. PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

Article 9

9.1. Nurse is recommended to obtain professional indemnity insurance when performing her/his practice and providing health care to patients. This is in the interest of patients, nurse and employer.

X. CONFLICT WITH MORAL AND ETHICAL BELIEVES

Article 10

10.1. Nurse shall seek Croatian Nursing Council's competent authorities for advice in a case when she/he is not certain that specific situation is in accordance with this Code.

10.2. Nurse shall give fair warning to her/his nursing colleague and try to help to solve the problem in informal way in a case when nurse notices that this nursing colleague violates ethical principles of a professional conduct.

10.3. Nurse shall inform Croatian Nursing Council, which will then take certain actions, in a case when this evident violation of this Code can not be solved in a friendly and informal way.

10.4. Nurses shall not deal with the reports which purpose is not protection of the profession, but to hurt or humiliate somebody.

10.5. Nurse shall cooperate with disciplinary bodies of the Croatian Nursing Council.

XI. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER NURSES

Article 11

11.1. Nurse shall treat other nurses in a same way she/he would want they treat her/him.

11.2. Nurses shall give respect and gratitude to their teachers for provided knowledge, skills and education.

11.3. Nurse shall provide generous help and in her/his best knowledge in a case that other nurse asks her/him for professional advice and help.

XII. RELATIONSHIP WITH CROATIAN NURSING COUNCIL

Article 12

12.1. Nurse shall consider Croatian Nursing Council as her/his professional head-quarter and shall protect and promote its reputation within profession and in public as well.

12.2. Nurse shall abide by the general orders and recommendations of the Croatian Nursing Council and carry out all obligations towards the Council in time.

XIII. FINAL ORDERS

Article 13

13.1. All nurses shall respect and abide by the orders of this Code.

13.2. Violations and appropriate sanctions for violations of this Code shall be regulated by the Council's general act.

13.3. Nurse shall refuse any professional activity which is contrary to this Code and the Council is obligated to provide help by its reputation and legal devices, if there is a need for it.

Article 14

This Code becomes valid on the eighth day from its announcement on the Council's website.

PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN NURSING COUNCIL

Dragica Šimunec