

# ICOH International Code of Ethics for Occupational Health Professionals - Draft Review of Code presented to ICOH Board in March 2012

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Revised ICOH Code – Special Session at ICOH 2012  
Congress in Cancun Contents

- **Title: : Review of the ICOH International Code of Ethics for Occupational Health Professionals**
- **Session panel: Peter Westerholm, (chair), Giovanni Costa (vice-chair), Godfrey B. Tangwa (Cameroon), Leslie London (South Africa), Julietta Rodriguez-Guzman (Colombia), Seichi Horie (Japan)**
- **Length of Session: 120 minutes**
- **Abstracts in Abstract book of ICOH 2012**
- **11 case scenarios in Congress Abstract book**
- **Hand-out material: Draft Revised Code.**

## **Motives for Review of ICOH Code**

- **Context of non-coordinated growth in numbers of Codes**
- **Need to update**
- **Avoidance of problems in code interpretation**
- **Avoidance of misunderstandings of the status of codes**
- **Guidance to resolve ethical dilemmas**
- **Enhance and develop ethical awareness of OH Professionals**

## **Purpose of the ICOH International Code of Ethics Preamble of Code, Article 2**

- **Promotion of ethical conduct and deterrence of unethical conduct of occupational health professionals**
- **Provision of a comprehensive set of standards or norms against which to judge professional behaviour**
- **Provision of guidance in situations where the occupational health professional is facing ethically difficult decisions**
- **Enhancement of public trust and respect for the occupational health professions**

## Review of ICOH International Code of Ethics ICOH Board WCE&T terms of reference

- **Operational aim:** Orientation of Code towards style of practical guideline in professional occupational health practice
- **WCE&T vision of review objective**  
Making Code a universally accessible and usable tool in enhancing moral awareness and ethical work practices of Occupational Health Professionals
- **!!! SIC !!!** Review objective carrying larger scope than review task

## ICOH Code Review Group Organization – CRG

- **WCE & T – the Core Group** : ICOH Board Working Committee on Ethics and Transparency (John Harrison, John Howard Jr, Giovanni Costa, Michel Guillemin, Peter Westerholm (chair))
- **Core Group Affiliates:** Jean- Francois Caillard, Sergio Iavicoli
- **Regional affiliates:**
  - Latin and South Americas:** Julietta Rodriguez-Guzman (Colombia)
  - Africa:** Professors Leslie London (Rep. of South Africa) and Godfrey B. Tangwa (Cameroon). Review Subgroup Africa with members Reginald B. Matchaba-Hove (Zimbabwe), Aceme Nyika (Zimbabwe), Nhlanhla MKhize (Republic of South Africa) and Remigius N. Nwabueze (Nigeria).
  - Asia:** Seichi Horie (Japan)

## **Strategies chosen for Code Review**

- **Strategy - Update of present Code text, adding supplementary articles or texts, as appropriate**
- **Task NOT to draft a new code, NOR a textbook on professional ethics**
- **Retain present structure of Code basically unchanged for easy recognition of ICOH core messages**
- **Making fundamental ethical values visible adding explanation in separate memo as a supplement to Code**
- **Seeking to adapt to changing moral landscape**
- **Seeking participation of ICOH Board members, SC:s and membership**

## **New elements in Reviewed Code text**

- **Memorandum (Godfrey B. Tangwa) on core Set of Values – A Code supplement or annexed document**
- **Preface and Introduction include para on Globalization and reference to i.a. Work Health Promotion as a task of OHPs**
- **”Basic Principles” include reference to bio-ethical value set of Doing Good, Harm Avoidance, Autonomy and Justice/Equity**
- **Under ”Duties and Obligations of OHPs” amendments in most paras.**
  - **New article § 14 on ”Research”**
  - **New article on ”Professional Independence” – § 18**
  - **”Clause on Ethics ” Article amended to ”Contracts of Employment”**
  - **amendments of articles addressing subjects Records, Medical confidentiality, collective health data**
  - **new articles on OHP accountability, conflicts of interest, professional networking, professional audit, networking and value-based professional conduct”**



## **Code Review draft Article § 19 –”Professional Independence”**

**Preamble:** Occupational health professionals **are obliged to** seek and maintain **full** professional independence and observe the rules of confidentiality

This is, in principle, conditional on the following dependencies:

- **Dependence on being evidence-informed on current professional knowledge and keeping updated with regard to recognized professional practices**
- **Dependence on working relationship with specialized health professional colleagues**
- **Dependence on working relationship with other health professions**
- **Dependence on relationship with customer/client/patient systems**
- **Dependence on being a member of organization acting in context of a health market**
- **Dependence on being gainfully employed or commissioned to provide professional service**

**The moral obligation to include interests of all involved stakeholders in seeking optimal occupational health solutions may imply facing ethical dilemmas, calling for impartial professionalism and competent ethical analysis.**



# Code Review Group - summing up

- We did what we set out to do:
- Regional involvement and commitment
- Draft Review value-based texts with practical guidance orientation
- Retaining Code structure and basic elements
- Setting Code into context of changing moral landscape
- The finalizing editing we did not do

**Thank you for your attention  
Merci de votre attention  
and  
To ALL ICOH MEMBERS WHO HAVE BECOME INVOLVED  
IN THE COURSE OF THE CODE REVIEW**

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED  
Code Review Group**

**John Harrison; John Howard Jr; Michel Guillemin; Giovanni Costa;  
Jean-Francois Caillard; Seichi Horie; Julietta Rodriguez-Guzman;  
Godfrey B. Tangwa; Leslie London; Aceme Nyike;  
Reginald B. Matchaba-Hove; Nhlanhla Mkhize, Remigius N. Nwabueze;  
Yukinori Kusaka; Maurizio Manno; Theodore Bazas; Susan A. Randolph;  
Jorma Rantanen; Marilyn Fingerhut; Sergio Iavicoli; Louis Patry;  
Kazutaka Kogi**

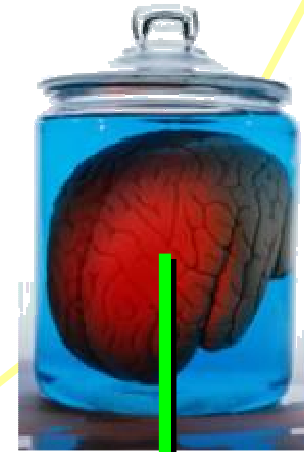
**Peter Westerholm**

Anders Persson MD, Centre of Medical Visualization,  
Linköping University Hospital

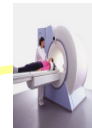
"Growing gaps Knowing-Understanding-Intervention"

A challenge to Professional Ethics

**Knowledge**



**Understanding**



**Intervening**

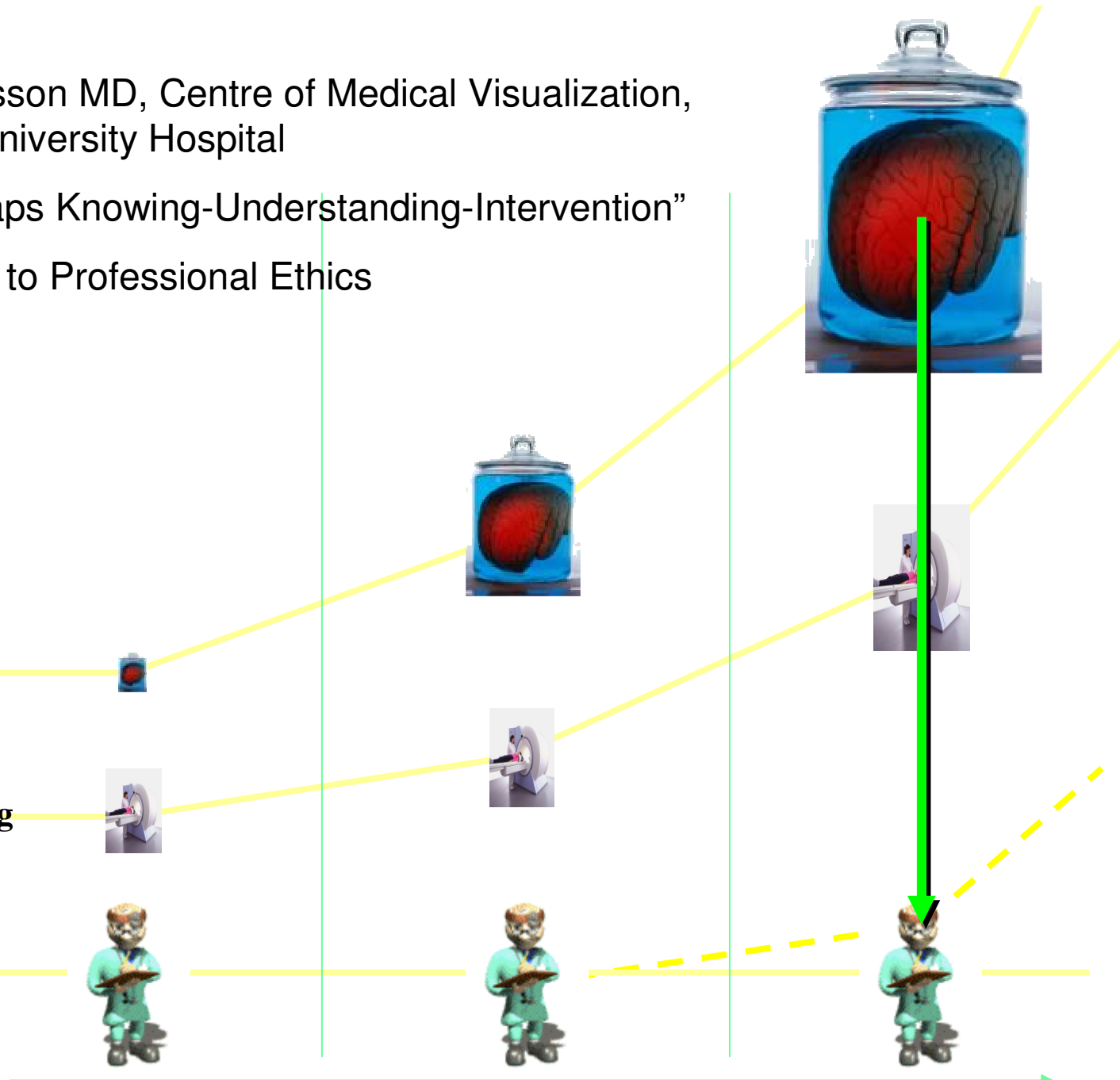


Yesterday

Today

Tomorrow

Time





**Status of draft Code review September 20th 2011:  
Working material**

**Measures remaining to be taken :**

- **Contact with ICOH partner organizations and stakeholders external to ICOH**
- **Drafting of ICOH President's foreword presenting Revised Code as an ICOH Core document and defining its status**
- **Additional language review (English)**
- **Code translation into French language version**
- **Examination of Property rights and copyright issues**
- **Presentation of draft Code Review to ICOH Board**
- **Special Session /Seminar at ICOH 2012 Congress Cancun (Mex.)**