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”
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
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.)