

23 February 2012

Alex Abernethy
Nursing Council of New Zealand
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By email: alex@nursingcouncil.org.nz

Dear Alex

Draft Code of Conduct

The New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) is pleased to be able to provide input into the Nursing Council's draft Code of Conduct.

Overall the NZMA is impressed with the comprehensive nature of the document and commend the Council for its professionalism in producing this resource. We do, however, make the following suggestions which you may wish to consider. Note that the first three suggestions are all based on the NZMA's Code of Ethics which we think resonates well with your Code.

There seems to be nothing in the guidelines covering the situation where a nurse is acting for a third party. In this regard you may wish to consider preparing something similar to the following guideline which appears in the NZMA's Code of Ethics (paragraph 32).

Where a doctor is performing an assessment on behalf of a third party, the patient must be clearly informed of who the third party is, the purpose of the assessment and the limits of confidentiality. Where the assessment occurs in the context of a treating relationship, the patient should be made aware that the doctor is ethically obliged to provide a complete and professional report.

There is also little about working with other health professionals. Refer to the NZMA Code of Ethics, paragraph 32.

When working in a team environment, doctors have a responsibility to behave co-operatively and respectfully towards team members.

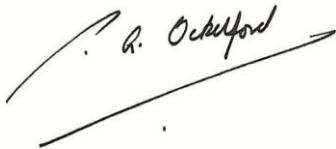
The Code is silent on the health of the nurse. Refer to the NZMA Code of Ethics, paragraph 26.

Doctors have both a right and a responsibility to maintain their own health and well being at a standard that ensures that they are fit to practise.

Finally we suggest that you use the term 'equity' rather than 'equality' in the section regarding working with Maori patients. Whereas equality denotes a description of 'sameness,' equity denotes an ethical principle concerning the absence of systematic disparities between groups with different levels of underlying social advantage / disadvantage.

We trust our suggestions are helpful.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Ockelford", written over a long, thin horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Dr Paul Ockelford
NZMA Chair