



# **PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT**

For

# **NURSES AND MIDWIVES**



Interim Federal Nursing and Midwifery Council MYANMAR 2023

(English Version)

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# INTRODUCTION

In line with International Council of Nurses (ICN) code of ethic (2021), this professional code of conduct for nurses and midwives is initially developed by the members of Interim Federal Nursing and Midwifery Council Myanmar. The working members thoroughly reviewed codes of conduct developed by nursing and midwifery board/council in other countries. A number of meetings and discussions have been conducted in setting out the principles and practice statements to be included in the code. Extensive inputs have been sought from all levels of nurses in clinical practice, education, and administrative roles.

The principles and practice statements are organized based on ICN's principal code of elements (2021):

Nurses/Midwives and People

Nurses/Midwives and Practice

Nurses/Midwives and Profession

Nurses/Midwives and Global Health

This code of conduct for nurses and midwives are set out in consistent with professional behaviours, ethical principles, and moral values to be upheld for public safety and quality of care. All level of nurses and midwives; working in clinical practice, management and leadership, education, research, regulatory and policy development roles must adhere to the set code of conduct. In case a nurse or midwife breaches the set code of conduct, IFNMC will take action in accordance with the established laws and regulations.

# Professional Code of Conduct for Nurses and Midwives

## Element 1# Nurses and Midwives and People

### ● Principle 1: Respect people's values, customs, beliefs and needs

Nurses and Midwives are required to provide care with consideration of and respect for people's values, needs, and rights, without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, social or economic status. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 1.1 Provide care in the way that respects the values, customs, and beliefs of the people.
- 1.2 Care for the people with kindness, compassion, and empathy.
- 1.3 Provide care with consideration of the needs and preferences of the people.
- 1.4 Provide care without discrimination based on ethnicity, age, gender identities, religion, cultural background, socioeconomic status, and nature of diseases.
- 1.5 Consider cultural sensitivities, and if required, consult with members of cultural and other groups as requested by the people.
- 1.6 Recognize appropriate cultural and religious care to support a dignified and peaceful death at the end of life.

### ● Principle 2: Respect people's right to have autonomy

Nurses and Midwives are obliged to respect the people's right to determine and make informed decisions about their health, and to be given accurate information that facilitates an informed decision. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 2.1 Respect the people's right to make informal choices and decisions for their health, and right to refuse the care/treatment procedures.
- 2.2 Avoid imposing one's view over political, cultural and religious beliefs of the people.
- 2.3 Ensure that explaining the procedure and asking permission was done prior to performing a specific care/treatment procedure.
- 2.4 Provide sufficient and accurate information about care/treatment procedures that require informed consent (e.g., surgery, blood transfusion).
- 2.5 Assist the people and their family members to seek more information from reliable sources, if required, to support informed choice and obtain the service from other health practitioners.
- 2.6 Provide necessary support, counselling and other aspects of care even if a person refuses certain care/treatment procedures.
- 2.7 When conducting research, respect the people's right to consent or decline participation, and provide accurate information about the purposes and procedures before obtaining informed consent.

● **Principle 3: Respect people's right to privacy and confidentiality**

Nurses and midwives have the responsibility to protect privacy and confidentiality of people's personal and health information. Only relevant information may be shared with others if necessary for the provision of care. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 3.1 Provide care in a manner that protects privacy and dignity of the people in all aspects of care.
- 3.2 Refrain from behaviour that may be interpreted as bullying or harassment and/or culturally unsafe.
- 3.3 Ensure privacy when performing nursing assessment and care procedures.
- 3.4 Protect confidentiality of the people's personal and health information. Avoid sharing people's photos, personal and \ health information on social media.
- 3.5 The people's personal and health information is accessed and disclosed only when necessary for providing care/ treatment, professional and legal purposes.
- 3.6 Obtain consent from people to disclose information to others in the healthcare team. In the absence of consent, a judgement about risk to people or publicity consideration must be made.
- 3.7 Maintain privacy and confidentiality of people's personal and health data collected when conducting research and case studies.
- 3.8 Respect a person's rights to have privacy and confidentiality continues after death.

**Professional Code of Conduct for Nurses and Midwives**

**Element 2# Nurses/Midwives and Practice**

● **Principle 4: Provide care with a responsible and accountable manner**

Nurses and midwives are responsible and accountable for nursing professional integrity and ensuring their practice is consistent with standards, guidelines and ethically appropriate care. Provide promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspects of care for the people in responsible and accountable manner. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 4.1 Maintain competency in clinical skills with application of critical thinking and evidence-based practice guidelines in provision of care.
- 4.2 Ensure that practice is carried out in accordance with ethical principles and practice guidelines.
- 4.3 Practice within the limit of competency and regulated scope of practice.
- 4.4 Demonstrate independent judgment and actions for nursing care within the scope of professional standards.
- 4.5 Maintain clear and accurate record and documentation: all documentation must be dated, signed, and kept security.
- 4.6 Consider health literacy issues and take into account in provision of care.

## ● Principle 5: Maintain safe practice and competency in providing care of people

Nurses and midwives are responsible and accountable to maintain safe practice and competency in providing care of people. Nurses and midwives illustrate the skills of critical thinking, clinical care, leadership and management, interpersonal relationships, evidence-based practice for person-centred care. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 5.1 Focus on providing people's safety, quality service and teamwork abilities to collaborate with team members and other health-care professionals.
- 5.2 Practice consistent with standard guidelines relating to safety and quality health care.
- 5.3 Advance active listening, clarification, verbal and nonverbal communication with the people, families, colleagues and administrators in order to maintain safe work environment and quality health care.
- 5.4 Upgrade the capabilities of utilizing evidence-based research findings, digital skills, language fluencies, and clinical skills.
- 5.5 Accept and delegate responsibility within the scope of practice for patient safety.
- 5.6 Share knowledge, teach and coach the colleagues and students to safeguard when potential risks exist in working environment.
- 5.7 Advocate adequacy of human resource for health-care to ensure quality care and minimize distress caused by imbalance workload.
- 5.8 Encourage and support colleagues to seek help if they are concerned with ability to practice safety.

## ● Principle 6: Work collaboratively and respectfully with health-care team and any other personnel

Nurses and midwives are required to work collaboratively and respectfully with colleagues and other personnel to meet the patient's needs and contribute quality and safe care. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 6.1 Acknowledge the experience and expertise of colleagues, and respect the contributions of all practitioners involve in health care.
- 6.2 Communicate health care colleagues and other personnel with respect and collaborative manner.
- 6.3 Maintain mutual respect with all levels of colleagues including students.
- 6.4 Make clear, effective, professional, and timely manner in communication with other health care professional or service providers.
- 6.5 Avoid destructive behaviours such as harassment, indifference dismissiveness, and/or verbally abuse.
- 6.6 Develop positive professional relationships including effective communication, mutual respect, compassion and honesty to enhance work environment.
- 6.7 Collaborate with regard to ethical issues of other professions in a manner consistent with those human values.
- 6.8 Advocate for the rights of nurses and midwives, and protect from being abused by other colleagues in accordance with the civil law.
- 6.9 Avoid any behaviors that degrade or harm professional image when communicating with individuals or others.

# Professional Code of Conduct for Nurses and Midwives

## Element 3# Nurses/Midwives and Profession

### ● Principle 7: Promote professionalism and maintain public trust

Nurses and midwives are accountable for their own actions and decisions. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 7.1 Demonstrate professional values: respect, justice, responsiveness, caring empathy, trustworthiness and integrity, solidarity, competency, and responsibility.
- 7.2 Maintain a high standard of professional and personal behaviour, in accordance with the ethics and dignity.
- 7.3 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in relationship with the patients to avoid compromising in therapeutic relationship.
- 7.4 Take initiative in development and implementation of guidelines, policy and procedures related to nursing practice, management, research, and education.
- 7.5 Be open and honest in interactions with people. Declare any conflict of interests including personal, financial, and commercial interest that could affect judgement in provision of patient care.
- 7.6 Protect people from exploitation, harm and act promptly if individual safety is compromised.
- 7.7 Create a positive practice environment to sustain safe and equitable working conditions.
- 7.8 Be responsible to maintain health for safe practices

### ● Principle 8: Refrain from professional misconduct

Nurses and midwives are obliged to practice under relevant laws and ethical standards. They must avoid in misuse of professional status that could bring the profession to disrepute or seriously undermine public trust and safety. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 8.1 Refrain from any behaviour: abuse, violent, misuse, mistreat, negligence that causes harm to the people.
- 8.2 Refrain from misusing the image of nursing, midwifery, and using it for self-interest.
- 8.3 Refrain from engaging in or encouraging unethical practices such as involving illegal termination of pregnancy substitute decision, selling unlicensed drugs, etc...
- 8.4 Refrain from fraudulent creation of documents using bribery, authorization, and corruption.
- 8.5 Refrain from consumption of drugs and alcohol during working hours that compromise safe practices.
- 8.6 Do not engage in sexual or intimate relationship with people under care.

## Element 4# Nurses/Midwives and Global Health

### ● Principle 9: Promote health and well-being of the people

Nurses and midwives must participate to achieve the United Nations sustainable Development Goals (UNsSDGs), and contribute to population health and health policy Development. They must be able to adapt with increasing global health threats. Under this principle, the nurses and midwives must comply with the following practice statements.

- 9.1 Respect and provide care in accordance with the people's right to access health and decent care.
- 9.2 Advocate for vulnerable population to obtain equitable health care.
- 9.3 Collaborate with other health and social care profession in contributing to and advocating for policies and programmes to address social determinants of health.
- 9.4 Keep up-to-date knowledge about the population health status and work towards achievement of the targets of National Health Plan and United Nations Sustainable Development goals (UNsSDGs).
- 9.5 Involve in planning, development and implementation of health care system strengthening for universal coverage of health care.
- 9.6 Comply with the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and guidelines of the organization for environmental health and reduction of risk.
- 9.7 Educate individual and communities about healthy lifestyle choices.
- 9.8 Promote health literacy of individuals and communities for self-care and well-being.
- 9.9 Engage in counselling and continuity of care for the people to cope with physical, psychological, and socio-economic difficulties. Refer to appropriate counselling services (one to one sessions, group session, family therapy or online counselling).

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# Glossary of Terms

1. Access health and decent care
2. Advocate
3. Autonomy
4. Collaboration
5. Competency
6. Continuing of care
7. Coverage of health care
8. Critical thinking
9. Cultural sensitivities
10. Culturally unsafe
11. Digital skills
12. Environmental health and risks
13. Equitable health care
14. Ethically appropriate care
15. Evidence-based practice guideline
16. Global health
17. Global health threats
18. Health and wellbeing
19. Health literacy issues
20. Human value
21. Image of nursing, midwifery
22. Imbalance workload
23. Independent judgement and action
24. Informed choice and decision
25. Justice
26. Language fluency/cultural competency
27. Limit of competency
28. Midwives
29. Needs
30. Negligence
31. Nurses
32. People
33. Person-centred care
34. Policy development
35. Population health
36. Population health status
37. Positive practice environment
38. Positive professional relationship
39. Practice integrity
40. Privacy and confidentiality
41. Professional and legal purpose
42. Professional boundaries
43. Professional values
44. Publicity
45. Quality health care
46. Regulated scope of practice
47. Responsiveness
48. Rights
49. Safe practice
50. Safe practice
51. Safe work environment
52. Scope of practice
53. Scope of professional standard
54. Self-care and wellbeing
55. Social determinants of health
56. Social media
57. Sufficient and accurate information
58. The rights of nurses, midwives
59. Work environment