

North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (NASPGHAN) Policy on Code of Ethics for Professional Conduct.

Preamble.

NASPGHAN has earned the respect of other scientific and professional organizations, and the general public, as a leader in advocating for the optimal health of our patients and their families. The society's goals and objectives in this regard are realized through efforts in patient care, education, research, service, and policy development. Maintenance of this trust in NASPGHAN's integrity and mission are of paramount importance to the society. This Code of Ethics for Professional Conduct is designed as a guide for NASPGHAN members and associates. It is based on the fundamental principles of medical ethics namely; autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice. It offers a framework for members to be responsible as representatives of this organization in their daily activities. While the Code constitutes a guideline for maintaining ethical consistency for specific parameters of the organization's interests, it is not, and cannot be, exhaustive.

1. Policy on Practicing the Art and Science of Medicine Responsibly.

Principles.

To promote the Society's ideals, NASPGHAN members should adopt the following principles:

- Accept a share of NASPGHAN's responsibility to society in matters related to skills and attitudes for patient care, medical education, research, communications and privacy.
- Recognize the responsibility to provide the generally accepted opinions of the profession when interpreting scientific knowledge to the public and trainees.
- Enter into associations, contracts and agreements only if professional integrity and the interests of patients and their families can be maintained and protected.

Policy and procedure.

To achieve these goals NASPGHAN encourages its members to:

- Engage in lifelong learning to maintain and improve professional knowledge, skills and attitudes and to share such wisdom with others.
- Participate in the education of future pediatric gastroenterologists and associates. Be a role model for trainees in the areas of service to patients,

teamwork, sensitivity, tolerance, fairness, accountability and professional integrity.

- Be cognizant of the biases that corporate/business/university/organizational ties may introduce into the consideration of research data and patient-care issues.
- Avoid exploitation of patients and institutions for personal advantage.

2. Policy on Communications representing NASPGHAN, the Mission of NASPGHAN and the Practice of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition.

Principles.

- Communications on matters relating to pediatric gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition should be as free as possible from personal prejudice and outside commercial or political influences.
- The well-being of our patients and society should at all times be safeguarded in matters affecting NASPGHAN policy guideline development and other activities sponsored by NASPGHAN.
- Members should adhere to a code of conduct that promotes NASPGHAN's mission to be recognized as a source of fact-based, honest, medical research and unbiased opinions.

Policy and procedure.

- Committee documents, educational materials, and disease consensus statements should be summaries of well researched peer-reviewed balanced opinions. The authors of these summaries, as well as the text of the summaries themselves, should be free from corporate influences related to the content of the policy being developed.
- Research activities should be both scientifically and ethically defensible and approved by an institutional research board. Informed consent should be obtained from the patient, or proxy, before enrollment in any research study. All reasonable steps should be taken to act in the best interests of our patients and to prevent harm to the patients and their families.
- In matters involving patient related research, agreements with manufacturers of medical equipment, pharmaceutical companies, and clinical laboratories should be disclosed at the time consent is obtained. Should harm occur, it must be disclosed to the patient, family and

appropriate authority immediately. Patient privacy must be assiduously maintained.

- NASPGHAN prides itself as an organization that opposes prejudice with respect to gender, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age and sexual preference, physical or mental disability. Members should refuse to participate in or support practices that violate these basic human rights.
- Members should inform their patients and colleagues when personal morality values might influence the recommendation or practice of any medical procedure that the patient needs or wants.

3. Policy on NASPGHAN Members' Personal Ethical Principles.

Principles.

- NASPGHAN members should resist any influence or interference that could undermine their professional integrity. By so doing NASPGHAN members can contribute to the Society's well-being and its mission through clinical practice, research, teaching, administration, and/or professional and societal advocacy.

Policy and procedure.

- Members should be responsible to society in matters related to the financing and delivery of healthcare and accept the responsibility of physicians to promote fair access to resources.
- Members should participate as an advocate for children's digestive health in governmental processes, such as promoting legislation to enhance the health and well-being of the community and the environment, and provide expert testimony in judicial proceedings when appropriate.
- Members should refrain from impugning the reputation of colleagues for personal motives.
- Members should protect and maintain their own health and well-being.

As members of NASPGHAN, physicians share the responsibility of maintaining the trust placed in the Society by our patients, the general public, regulatory and licensing agencies, the scientific community and jurisdictional bodies, by acting with integrity and honesty at all times. While these guidelines are only advisory, the maintenance of this trust in NASPGHAN's integrity and mission is of paramount importance to the Society and requires protection. Objective evidence that indicates gross disregard for NASPGHAN's principles for ethical conduct will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action including possible termination of membership in the Society. (See Policy on Due Process for Unprofessional Conduct).