

# American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists

## Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines

### PREAMBLE

The members of the American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists recognize the unique privileges and responsibilities inherent in the doctor-patient relationship. Accordingly, all members subscribe to the following basic tenets of ethical dental practice:

**Autonomy:** Patients have the right to autonomy of thought, intention and action when making decisions about their healthcare.

**Non-maleficence:** The dentist anesthesiologist will not willingly harm a patient and will protect the patient from incurring harm while under his or her care.

**Beneficence:** The dentist anesthesiologist will provide care with the intent of promoting the patient's welfare.

**Justice:** The dentist anesthesiologist will be fair in his or her treatment of patients, colleagues and coworkers.

**Truthfulness:** The dentist anesthesiologist will be honest in his or her communications.

These basic tenets are further described in the following principles:

- I. A dentist anesthesiologist shall be dedicated to providing competent care with compassion and respect for patient dignity and rights.
- II. A dentist anesthesiologist shall respect the law and also recognize a responsibility to seek changes in those requirements which are contrary to the best interests of the patient.
- III. A dentist anesthesiologist shall respect the privacy and confidence of patients, colleagues and other health professionals.
- IV. A dentist anesthesiologist shall continue to maintain his or her continuing professional education in order to provide highly competent patient care and consultation.
- V. A dentist anesthesiologist shall be free to choose whom to serve, with whom to associate and the environment in which to provide patient care, while fulfilling his or her obligation to patient care.
- VI. A dentist anesthesiologist shall recognize a responsibility to participate in activities contributing to improvement of the community and betterment of public health.
- VII. A dentist anesthesiologist shall support access to medical and dental care.

## ETHICAL GUIDELINES

The practice of anesthesiology within the scope of dentistry involves unique situations for providing care to patients. The following guidelines are the standards of conduct for this practice, willingly accepted by all members of the American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists.

### Responsibilities to Patients

1. The dentist anesthesiologist shall provide faithful care that is in the best interest of the patient.
2. The dentist anesthesiologist will respect the patient's right of self-determination. This includes involving patient and/or guardian in treatment decisions, as appropriate to their developmental capacity and the health issues involved. The dentist anesthesiologists will not use their professional skills to coerce or restrain individuals with adequate decision-making capacity.
3. Recognizing the unique vulnerability of anesthetized patients, dentist anesthesiologists will care for each patient's physical and psychological safety, comfort and dignity. Dentist anesthesiologists should monitor themselves and their colleagues to protect anesthetized patients from disrespectful or abusive behavior.
4. Dentist anesthesiologists will maintain the confidentiality of patient's personal and medical information.
5. Dentist anesthesiologists will provide preoperative evaluation and care and should facilitate the process of informed decision-making, especially with regard to the choice of anesthetic technique.
6. When dentist anesthesiologists are supervising physicians or dentists in training, or using auxiliary anesthesia personnel, they will remain personally and continuously available for the direction and supervision of the anesthetic.
7. Dentist anesthesiologists will provide appropriate postanesthetic care for their patients.
8. Dentist anesthesiologists will not participate in exploitive financial relationships.
9. Dentist anesthesiologists will apply consistent care and diligence to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay for care.

### Responsibilities to Colleagues

1. Dentist anesthesiologists will promote a cooperative and respectful relationship with their professional colleagues that facilitates quality care for patients.
2. Dentist anesthesiologists should provide timely consultation when requested and seek appropriate consultation when appropriate.

3. Dentist anesthesiologists should cooperate with colleagues to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of care.
4. Dentist anesthesiologists should advise colleagues whose ability to practice becomes temporarily or permanently impaired to appropriately modify or discontinue their practice. They should assist, to the extent of their own abilities, with the re-education or rehabilitation of a colleague who is returning to practice.
5. Verbal and written contracts should be honest and understandable, and should be respected.
6. Dentist anesthesiologists personally handle many controlled and potentially dangerous substances and therefore, have a special responsibility to keep these substances from illicit use.

#### Responsibilities to themselves

1. Dentist anesthesiologists are obligated to maintain competency in their anesthesia skills throughout the course of their career.
2. The practice of anesthesiology requires adequate physical, mental and sensory capabilities. When doubt arises about their health, dentist anesthesiologists should seek medical evaluation and care. When indicated, they should modify or cease their practice as appropriate.

#### Responsibility to community and society

1. A dentist anesthesiologist should recognize a responsibility to participate in the activities that improve the community.
2. A dentist anesthesiologist shall not engage in misconduct in research and/or publication.