



# Australasian College for Emergency Medicine

## Code of Conduct

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V7 COR235

## Document Review

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Timeframe for review:	Every two years, or earlier if required
Document authorisation:	ACEM Board
Document implementation:	Chief Executive Officer
Document maintenance:	Manager, Governance and Standards

## Revision History

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Version	Date	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Jul-2012	Approved by Council
v1-1	Mar-2014	Consequential changes only as per governance review (eg. 'Council' to 'Board').
v2	Sep-2014	Clause 4 (duty of disclosure) inserted. The following regulation is repealed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>reg. 5.20 – Duty of Disclosure</li></ul>
v3	Jun-2016	General revisions
v4	Aug-2018	Revisions throughout approved by the Board
v5	Feb-2019	Revisions to Document Review
v6	Dec-2022	Two-yearly review incorporating contemporaneous revisions throughout, including imbedding of the College vision, mission and ACEM Core Values into the Code and clarification of breaches to the Code
v7	Aug-2023	Revisions to clause 5.1

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## 1. Purpose and background

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This Code of Conduct seeks to establish a common understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of all members, trainees and other representatives of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM; the College). The Code of Conduct represents a broad framework that will help determine appropriate actions in the role of a member, trainee and other College representatives with regard to his/her/their professional conduct or behaviour.

This Code is to be read in conjunction with the codes of conduct of the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) and the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) for medical practitioners (the 'statutory authorities').

## 2. Terminology

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### ***ACEM/the College***

means the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.

### ***College member***

means a person admitted as a member of the College pursuant to the provisions of the ACEM Constitution and associated regulations.

### ***Governing Body***

means the ACEM Board, the Council of Advocacy, Practice and Partnerships (CAPP), or the Council of Education (COE).

### ***Trainee***

means trainees enrolled in and undertaking the FACEM Training Program and, for the purposes of this policy, also includes Emergency Medicine Certificate, Emergency Medicine Diploma, Emergency Medicine Advanced Diploma and Diploma of Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine (DipPHRM) trainees, and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) undertaking College requirements for the purpose of attaining eligibility for election to Fellowship of the College.

### ***College entity***

means a College entity, howsoever styled, established by an ACEM governing body pursuant to approved terms of reference and in accordance with the *Policy on College Entities*. This includes any committee, subcommittee or other entity authorised to carry out any activity or function of the College.

### 3. The Vision, Mission and Core Values of ACEM

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The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) is the not-for-profit organisation responsible for training emergency physicians and advancement of professional standards in emergency medicine in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. As the peak professional organisation for emergency medicine, ACEM has a vital interest in ensuring the highest standards of emergency medical care are maintained for all persons requiring medical care across Australasia.

**ACEM's Vision:** To be the trusted authority for ensuring clinical, professional, and training standards in the provision of quality, evidence-based, patient-focused emergency care.

**ACEM's Mission:** Promote excellence in the delivery of quality emergency care to the community through our committed and expert members.

**ACEM Core Values:** These values define the organisation's guiding principles and underpin the way ACEM works in order to meet its vision and mission of ensuring the highest standards are maintained in the training of emergency physicians, and in the provision of emergency care to the communities of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

- **Respect** – We work for one another, for persons requiring medical care and for other health professionals. We practise in ways that defer to the inherent humanity of others, that give space and opportunity to the thoughts and minds of the people we work with, and that give regard to their position of strength or vulnerability.
- **Integrity** – We care for one another, for persons requiring medical care and for other health professionals. We practise in ways that are honest, authentic, and upright, and uphold the guiding principles and standards of emergency medicine.
- **Collaboration** – We partner with one another, with persons requiring medical care and with other health professionals. We unite to achieve better outcomes, to learn and to advance as a body, as a specialty, and as a practice.
- **Equity** – We are fair to one another, to persons requiring medical care and to other health professionals. We work in ways that are impartial and aware. We acknowledge disparities in health outcomes across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, and we strive for a system and service that is better.

### 4. Professional conduct

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ACEM Officers, members and trainees and other College representatives shall at all times:

- a. act in accordance with the aims of the College, its regulations and policies;
- b. act in accordance with the ACEM Core Values of respect, integrity, collaboration and equity;
- c. conduct themselves in such a way as to uphold the reputation and good standing of the College;
- d. avoid acts or omissions that may damage the professional reputation of another member (this excludes disclosures required to be made by law) or the College;
- e. interact with persons requiring medical care in a culturally safe way;
- f. not claim to represent or give the perception that they represent the views or opinions of the College without express permission or endorsement;
- g. maintain professional competence through engagement in appropriate continuing professional development or training, as applicable;
- h. treat all persons, including colleagues and ACEM staff, with respect and courtesy, and with sensitivity to the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds;
- i. resolve conflicts with colleagues in a non-threatening and constructive manner;
- j. utilise ACEM resources responsibly and appropriately; and
- k. maintain appropriate confidentiality with regard to College business not in the public domain.

The College's standards of professional conduct relate to all forms of behaviour and communication, including written, verbal, non-verbal, electronic and social media. College members, trainees and other College representatives are to uphold these standards of professional conduct when working on behalf of the College, engaged in College business, or when there are potential implications for the reputation and good standing of ACEM. Additionally, the College expects that all members, trainees and other College representatives uphold these standards in all professional contexts.

## 5. Duty of disclosure

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### 5.1 Members and trainees who are medical practitioners

For the purposes of section 5.1:

- in relation to the Australian jurisdiction — 'practice' has the same meaning as that given by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra), and 'practitioner' has a corresponding meaning.
  - in relation to the Aotearoa New Zealand jurisdiction — 'practice' has the same meaning as that given by the MCNZ, and 'practitioner' has a corresponding meaning.
- a. A member or trainee who in any jurisdiction (Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand or overseas):
- is charged with a criminal offence; or
  - has their name removed from the register of medical practitioners by a medical registration authority; or
  - has any condition, restriction, undertaking, reprimand or suspension affecting their right to practise medicine that was not previously known to the College or routinely associated with their registration imposed by a medical registration authority; or
  - is aware of any further matters subject to the *ACEM Constitution* clause 4.3 – Termination or suspension of membership by resolution of the Board that may potentially have an affect on their membership of the College (if applicable)

has a duty to inform the College in writing within the timeframe prescribed in applicable College regulations, policies or procedures, or otherwise within 14 days of being notified of such.

- b. Upon notification by a member of any circumstances in relation to which a member has a duty of disclosure, the Board shall notify the member in writing that their membership may be terminated or suspended pursuant to clause(s) 4.2 and/or 4.3 as relevant of the *ACEM Constitution* or pursuant to the relevant College regulations or policies.
- c. Upon notification by a trainee of any circumstances in relation to which a trainee has a duty of disclosure, the College shall notify the trainee in writing that their status as a trainee will be considered in accordance with applicable College regulations.
- d. If the member or trainee to whom such notice must be given holds any College office-bearing position and/or serves on a College entity or in a College role, the College shall:
- consult with the member or trainee to establish whether they wish to voluntarily suspend their role in the College pending the outcome of any charges or review, and
  - ensure that the function of the College office-bearing/entity position or role is maintained.

### 5.2 Other members and College representatives

- a. A member or other person serving on a College entity or in a College role ('College representative'), not being a medical practitioner, who, in any Australasian or overseas jurisdiction, is charged with a criminal offence has a duty to inform the Board in writing the timeframe prescribed in College regulations, policies or procedures, or otherwise within 14 days of so being charged or of receiving formal notification of such.

- b. The Board shall consult with the member or College representative to establish whether they wish to voluntarily suspend their role in the College pending the outcome of any charges or review and ensure that the function of the College office-bearing position or role is maintained.

## 6. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

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The College takes breaches of the Code of Conduct seriously. Complaints concerning potential breaches of the Code of Conduct by College members, trainees and other College representatives will be handled under the ACEM *Complaints Policy* and the *Procedures for Submission and Resolution of Complaints*. Should an individual fail to meet the standards of professional conduct or be found in breach of the Code of Conduct, steps may be taken to address their behaviour and sanctions applied accordingly.

## 7. Associated documents

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- Medical Board of Australia Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia
- Good Medical Practice (MCNZ)
- ACEM Constitution
- ACEM Regulations
- ACEM Core Values
- Complaints Policy (COR166)
- Conflict of Interest Policy (COR139)
- Discrimination, Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy (COR133)
- Intellectual Property Policy (COR64)
- Media Policy (COR90)
- Member/Staff Relations Policy (COR304)
- Procedures for Submission and Resolution of Complaints (COR656)
- Privacy Conduct Matters Policy (COR552)
- Privacy Policy (COR200)
- Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy (COR335)
- Social Media Policy (COR345)
- Whistleblower Policy (COR450)



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