**CODE OF ETHICS OF THE NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL HYPNOTHERAPISTS INCORPORATED**

The purpose of this Code of Ethics (**Code**) is to set out the values and principles underpinning the ethical obligations and responsibilities of all members of the New Zealand Association of Professional Hypnotherapists Incorporated (**NZAPH**) who provides, or has provided, the service of hypnotherapy (each referred to as a **Member Hypnotherapist** in this document).

The Code:

* applies to all Member Hypnotherapists while they are providing the service of hypnotherapy;
* underpins the relationship between Member Hypnotherapists and their clients, and between Member Hypnotherapists and other health care professionals; and
* provides a guide for the public on the ethical responsibilities expected of Member Hypnotherapists.

The Code does not:

* apply to Member Hypnotherapists providing services in other approaches i.e. other than hypnotherapy (and where Member Hypnotherapists provide services in other approaches, their clients are recommended to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the practitioner to provide such service);
  + For the avoidance of doubt, this Code does not apply to Member Hypnotherapists when they are providing services that are otherwise regulated under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.
* cover matters relating to training schools and training standards;
* deal with the conduct of other professional bodies (or their officers or representatives);
* cover matters relating to third-parties (including by way of example the failure of a software product used to assist with service delivery);
* cover matters more appropriately dealt with by a suitable supervisory authority or other third-party to whom a complaint could be made;
* deal with disputes over fees, payments, and/or refunds.

*For the purposes of this Code, reference to “consent” throughout this document means the informed consent provided by a client to the treatment and/or service offered by the Member Hypnotherapist, whether in writing or verbally, in person or via their parent/legal guardian for clients aged under 16.*

**Making a Complaint**

Any person can bring a potential breach of the Code by a Member Hypnotherapist to the attention of NZAPH in accordance with NZAPH’s <https://www.nzaph.com/complaints> complaints Information about how to make a complaint to NZAPH can be found at [www.NZAPH.com/contact](http://www.NZAPH.com/contact) or email info@NZAPH.com.

1. Delivery of Service
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. Provide hypnotherapy services to clients solely in those areas in which the Member Hypnotherapist is competent to do so and for which they carry relevant professional indemnity insurance. ‘Competency’ means meeting the requirements of NZAPH’s Membership Criteria Policy, including having requisite training, skills, and experience but need not exclude treating a client for a condition which the Member Hypnotherapist has not treated before, provided that due diligence and professionalism is observed.
      2. Act in a non-biased, non-prejudicial manner towards all clients, providing all clients with an identical quality of service and treatment irrespective of the differences which are to be found between clients, including but not restricted to ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation and/or disability.
      3. Disclose full details of all relevant memberships, training, experience, qualifications, and appropriate avenues of complaint to clients upon request.
      4. Only represent themselves as having qualifications and memberships to which they have valid proof of entitlement.
      5. Explain fully to clients in advance of any treatment the fee levels, precise terms of payment, any charges which might be imposed for non-attendance or cancelled appointments, and, wherever relevant, privacy and confidentiality considerations. If for therapeutic reasons the Member Hypnotherapist wishes to modify treatment (e.g. to extend the treatment plan) any effect this has on terms, conditions, and/or pricing must be clearly explained to the client before the modification takes effect.
      6. Present all services and products in an unambiguous manner (to include any limitations and realistic outcomes of treatment) and ensure that the client retains complete control over the decision to purchase such services or products. Guarantees of either a cure or a successful resolution of the problem/s presented shall not be offered. Member Hypnotherapists must be aware of and at all times comply with applicable consumer laws including the Fair Trading Act 1986 and the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993.
2. Client Welfare
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. Work in ways that will promote client autonomy and well-being and that maintain respect and dignity for the client.
      2. Remain aware of their own limitations and wherever appropriate be prepared to refer a client to another practitioner (regardless of discipline) who might be expected to offer suitable treatment.
      3. Give full consideration to the efficacy of treatment, including the manner in which their rapport with the client may affect such efficacy. The Member Hypnotherapist has the right to refuse or terminate any treatment if they have a reasonable belief that treatment will not be, or continue to be, efficacious. In refusing or terminating treatment, due care must be given to fully explaining the rationale for refusal or termination to the client.
      4. Ensure that wherever a client is seeking assistance for the relief of physical symptoms, that unless already having done so, the client be advised to contact a registered medical practitioner. Member Hypnotherapists shall not attempt to diagnose physical symptoms unless they have undergone relevant medical training in diagnostics.
      5. Member Hypnotherapists shall never knowingly offer advice that conflicts with or is contrary to the advice given by the client’s registered medical practitioners. If the Member Hypnotherapist has concerns regarding a client’s prescribed medication, they may suggest that the client consult their medical practitioner.
      6. Use due care and diligence to avoid the implantation of false memories in the client and ensure that the client is made fully aware that memories experienced while in a suggestible state are not necessarily correlated with, or to be taken as, real and valid memories of either the client’s past or actual events.
      7. Ensure that they comply with all applicable health and safety legislation, including that:
         1. their workplace and all facilities offered to clients and any person who may be accompanying them are suitable for purpose and compliant with occupational health and safety standards; and
         2. they take all reasonable care to ensure the physical safety of the client and any person who may be accompanying them.
      8. Refrain from using their position of trust or confidence to:
         1. cross the professional boundaries appropriate to the therapist/client relationship; or
         2. exploit the client emotionally, sexually, financially or in any other way whatsoever.
      9. Immediately terminate the client relationship in any situation in which a sexual, financial, or other non-professional relationship develops during the course of treatment. Member Hypnotherapists can seek advice from NZAPH on this.
      10. Only make physical contact with a client in a manner that is therapeutically appropriate and after obtaining the client’s verbal or written consent. Member Hypnotherapists can seek advice from NZAPH on this.
      11. Provide an explanation and obtain permission from the client before employing tactile induction or deepening techniques.
      12. Never protract treatment unnecessarily and terminate treatment at the earliest opportunity that is consistent with the good care of the client.
      13. Maintain strict confidentiality within the client/therapist relationship, in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020, the Health Information Code 2020, and any other applicable law.
      14. Where the Member Hypnotherapist is working as part of a larger team, for example within an institution or through a multi-disciplinary or similar clinical approach, or where the client has been referred by a medical practitioner or agency with conditions placed on the referral as to shared disclosure by the Member Hypnotherapist to the practitioner or agency, then provided that it is clear that the client consents, confidential information may be shared by the Member Hypnotherapist with the team or referring practitioner or agency, in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020, the Health Information Code 2020, and any other applicable law.
      15. Ensure that client notes and records be kept secure and confidential and that the use of both manual and computer records remains compliant with the Privacy Act 2020 and the Health Information Code 2020, including in relation to retention.
      16. Member Hypnotherapists shall maintain accurate and secure case notes, which may include personal details, emergency contact information, general practitioner details, medical history, medications (if applicable), problem areas, session progress, and any contracts entered into with the client. The inclusion of emergency contact details and medical history is recommended as best practice.
      17. Member Hypnotherapists shall obtain written or recorded permission from the client (or their legal guardians, if applicable) before recording any client sessions. If verbal consent is obtained at the start of the session, this must be documented before recording begins. Identifiable case details shall not be shared or published in any form without explicit client consent. ‘Recording’ refers to any method other than the usual taking of written case notes.
3. Relationship with Professional Body
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. If a Member Hypnotherapist wishes to use a client’s session as an anonymised case study, they must obtain written consent from the client. If all identifying details are fully removed, consent may not be necessary.
      2. Notify NZAPH via email, of any change to their practice name, contact address, telephone number or email address, at the earliest convenience.
      3. Inform NZAPH, in writing, of:
         1. any alteration in the circumstances which would affect either their position or ability as Member Hypnotherapist;
         2. any complaint of which they are aware relating to their professional practice which is being, or has been, made against them;
         3. any disciplinary action taken against them by any professional body; and
         4. any criminal offence with which they have been charged and, if applicable, convicted.
      4. Make available all relevant information requested for anyinvestigation by any person appointed by the NZAPH without unreasonable delay and comply fully with all requirements inherent within the NZAPH dispute resolution procedure.
4. Advertising, Display of Credentials, NZAPH Code of Ethics
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. Ensure that all advertising, no matter in what form or medium it is placed, represents a truthful, honest and accurate representation of themselves, their skill-base, and qualifications.
      2. Display only valid qualifications and certificates issued in respect of relevant training courses and events, or certificates of membership, registration, validation or accreditation as issued or awarded by relevant professional bodies.
      3. Ensure that clients can request, and will be provided with, a copy of the current Code and all relevant practising certificates in an appropriate electronic or hard copy format.
      4. Make no claim that they hold specific qualifications unless such claim can be fully substantiated.
5. Use of specific titles
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. Only use the title ‘Dr’ if they are medically licensed in New Zealand or if their title is both New Zealand issued and accredited and in a subject relevant to hypnotherapy (e.g. counselling or psychology). All Member Hypnotherapists using this title should explain in their advertising literature and to their clients, the nature and subject of the title and the awarding body. Non-medical ‘Drs’ should declare that they are not medical practitioners in their advertising literature and to their clients.
      2. Avoid the possibility of misdirecting their clients in using the title ‘Dr’. Misdirecting a client falls into three categories:
         1. Medical Misdirection – where the client is led to believe, by action or omission, intended or inadvertent, that the Member Hypnotherapist is a licensed medical practitioner when this is not the case.
         2. Misdirection by Relevance – where the client is led to believe, by action or omission, intended or inadvertent, that the Member Hypnotherapist’s title is directly relevant to the practice of their therapy, when it is not (e.g. the doctorate is in an unrelated subject).
         3. Misdirection by Quality – where the client is led to believe, by action or omission, intended or inadvertent, that the Member Hypnotherapist’s title fulfils the requirements of widely recognised common NZ standards for doctorates in Chartered Universities or Government licensed awarding bodies (e.g. a ‘life experience’ doctorate or foreign award whose accreditation standards are questionable).
      3. Only use the title ‘Professor’ if they hold a position in a tertiary institution in NZ which entitles them to be called a Professor, and the use of the title should be fully explained to the client.
      4. Only use the title ‘Reverend’ if suitably authorised to do so, only when offering hypnotherapy in a religious context, and the use of this title should be fully explained to the client.
6. Consent to Hypnotherapy
   1. People aged 16 or over are entitled to consent to their own treatment. This can only be overruled in exceptional circumstances.
   2. Young people (aged 16 or 17) are presumed to have sufficient capacity to decide on their own medical treatment, unless there is significant evidence to suggest otherwise.
   3. Parent or legal guardian consent must be obtained for all children aged under 16.
7. Supervision and Continuing Professional Development
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall maintain and/or improve their level of skills and professional competence in accordance with the requirements laid down by NZAPH.
8. Online and Remote Therapy
   1. All Member Hypnotherapists shall:
      1. Member Hypnotherapists must ensure that clients fully understand the online therapy process, including session logistics, privacy considerations, and the steps to take in case of technical disruptions. If an internet connection is lost during hypnosis, the client is responsible for safely emerging from the hypnotic state on there own, and a pre-suggestion is recommended to facilitate this. Clients are also responsible for maintaining a stable internet connection and ensuring a private, distraction-free environment for their session.
      2. Obtain appropriate insurance to cover online work.
      3. It is recommended that clients provide an alternative method of contact, such as a phone number, in case of technical failure during an online session. A third-party emergency contact is also recommended and consent to understanding their consumer rights under the code of health and disability consumers rights before the full session begins.
      4. It is recommended that clients provide an alternative method of contact, such as a phone number, in case of technical failure during an online session. A third-party emergency contact is also recommended.
      5. Ensure that the client has been given verbal instructions about what to do in the event of a loss of communication.
      6. Take appropriate measures to protect the integrity and privacy of their computer system.
9. Research Ethics
   1. All research should be carried out in accordance with the Research Ethics Guidelines of the Health Research Council of New Zealand.
10. Ethic Review and Disciplinary Process
    1. Failure to adhere to this Code of Ethics may result in a review by the NZAPH Ethics Committee. Depending on the severity of the violation, actions may include a warning, remedial training, suspension, or removal from the association.

Violations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering intent, impact, and previous conduct. Minor breaches may result in education and guidance, while serious or repeated violations may lead to formal disciplinary action. The NZAPH Ethics Committee will conduct a fair and confidential review process, allowing members an opportunity to respond before any disciplinary action is taken. Members have the right to appeal decisions in accordance with NZAPH’s ethical review procedures.