CODE OF ETHICS

FOR HOMOEOPATHIC PRACTITIONERS

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HOMOEOPATHY

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

Constituted by the Government of Pakistan, under the Unani, Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic Practitioners Act, 1965 (II of 1965).

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PREFACE.

Man has been afflicted with diseases and ailments from the time he came into being. In fact life and disease go hand in hand. Through the ages man has fought a relentless battle against disease. But the more he alienated from the nature the more complicated and complex has become his combat against disease. He is still striving hard to discover new system of treatment, finding new drugs and discarding the old ones. Drugs and medicines which were pronounced as panacea for certain diseases are now rejected and discarded as harmful poisons. No one can say with any amount of certainty what would be the fate of modern Life saving drugs a few years hence.

2. In this gloom of uncertainty the suffering humanity can find a beacon of light. Christian Frederick Samuel Hahnemann, the great apostle of the Law of similar has left a perfect, everlasting, never changing system of treatment i.e. Homoeopathy. According to him a Homoeopath has an onerous responsibility of restoring health to the sick through a system which is gentle, rapid and permanent . To achieve this Hahnemann has laid down unassailable principles in his Organon. One should follow these principles in letter and spirit to avoid disappointment or failure.

3. Medical profession is the noblest vocation. It is, therefore, imperative for every practitioner not only to abide by the laws of the country but also to inculcate an ideal standard of professional conduct and behavior. He would then earn the esteem of the patients and respect from the Society. This booklet enunciates the guiding principles of professional conduct for the Homoeopaths. Some of them are : -

(a) He / She should fulfill his / her duty to the profession and the country to the best of his / her ability and feel due pride in rendering service to the people.

(b) He / She should strictly conform to professional ethics and abide by Rules and Regulations set-forth by the authority.

(c) He / She should respect professional opinion and not stand aloof from the interest of the profession. In case of difference of opinion he / she should refrain from public manifestation of his / her views.

(d) Interest of patients should be his / her foremost guide line. People have implicit faith in the profession. It should not only be maintained but enhanced. There should be no let-up in this regard.

(e) Breach of any Rule or Regulation will have serious repercussions and shall result in removal of the offender's name from the register or the list as the case may be.

(f) He / She should follow the dictates of his / her conscience in all professional affairs and should be polite, gentle and friendly to all without regard to one's caste or creed, colour or race, or social status. He / She should uphold the honourable traditions of the profession at all cost.

by order of the
Board of Homoeopathic System of
Medicine, Pakistan.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR HOMOEOPATHIC PRACTITIONERS.

I. Warning Notice for Registered or Listed Homoeopaths.

The Board of Homoeopathic System of Medicine desires to bring to the notice of Registered and Listed Homoeopaths, the following offences and forms of professional misconduct which may be brought before it for disciplinary action.

(a) The Board may direct the removal altogether or for a specified period from the Register or the list of the name of any Homoeopath who has been convicted of any such offence as implies, in the opinion of the Board, a defect of character or who after an inquiry at which opportunity has been given to such Homoeopath to be heard in person or through a lawyer, has been held by the Board, has been found guilty of infamous conduct in any professional respect. The Board may also direct that any name so removed shall be restored.

(b) It must be clearly understood that the instances of offences and of professional misconduct which are given here do not constitute and are not intended to constitute a complete list of the infamous acts which may be punished by erasure from the Register, and that by issuing this notice the Board is in no way precluded from considering and dealing with any form of professional misconduct on the part of Registered or Listed Homoeopaths (as for example , immorality involving the abuse of professional relationship, bringing false accusation against a brother practitioner, or taking advantage of their position to defeat the purposes of the provision of Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia) which may be brought before it, although it may not appear to come within the scope or precise wording of any of the categories herein set forth. Circumstances may and do arise from time to time in relation to which there may occur questions of professional misconduct which do not come within the purview of any of these categories. In such instances, as in all others, the Board has to consider and decide upon the facts brought before it.

II. Advertising and Canvassing.

The practices of : -

(a) advertising by a Registered or Listed Homoeopath with a view to his / her own gain particularly if deprecatory of other practitioners. or of sanctioning such advertising.

(b) employing or sanctioning the employment of agents. or canvassers for the purpose of procuring patients, and

(c) association with or accepting employment under any association which practises canvassing or advertising for the purpose of procuring patients. or sanctioning or acquiring in the publication of notices. commending or directing attention to the practitioner's professional skill. knowledge. services or qualifications. or depreciating those of others. or of being associated with or employed by those who procure or sanction such advertising or publication. are in the opinion of the Board. contrary to the public interest and discreditable to the profession. Any Homoeopath resorting to any of such practices renders himself / herself liable. or proof of the facts. to have his name erased from the Register or the List.

III. Unqualified Assistants and Covering.

The employment by any Registered or Listed Homoeopath in connection with his professional practice of an assistant who is not duly qualified person to attend. treat a patient in respect of matters requiring professional discretion or skill is. in the opinion of the Board. dangerous to the public health. Any Registered or Listed Homoeopath proved to have so employed such an unqualified assistant is liable to have his / her name erased from the Register or the List. Any Registered or Listed Homoeopath who by his / her presence. countenance, advice. assistance or cooperation knowingly enables an unqualified or unregistered person. whether described as an assistant or otherwise. to attend . treat a patient in respect of any matter requiring professional practice as if the said person were duly qualified and registered. is liable. on proof of the facts . to have his name erased from the Register or the List.

NOTE :- This does not apply so as to restrict the proper training and instruction of bonafide students or the legitimate employment of dressers. midwives. compounders and skilled mechanics under the immediate personal supervision of a Registered or Listed practitioner.

IV. Association with Unqualified Persons.

Any Registered or Listed Homoeopath who assists an unqualified person to attend on or treat a patient in respect of matters requiring professional discretion or skill will be liable. on proof of the facts. to have his / her name erased from the Register or the List.

NOTE :- (1) The Board will consider each case on its own merits. In considering such cases in which Registered or Listed Homoeopaths have been reported as having been in consultation or association with such practitioners. due consideration will be given to the reputed practice of the registered practitioner that is to say whether such association is of an occasional nature or otherwise. If a registered or listed practitioner has been called in by the patient or his friends to advise and has found such a practitioner in attendance and he has rendered assistance to the patient. such an action is not of reprehensible character.

(2) The Board desires to make it clear to all Homoeopaths that it considers their professional association with bodies or societies of unqualified persons. formed for the purpose of "turning out" unqualified practitioners. fraught with danger to the public health and will be dealt with as such.

2. The Board would not. however. consider objectionable :-

(i) Arranging for lectures in science or in elementary human anatomy or physiology provided these lectures are open to the public and were not given under the auspices of such bodies or societies;

(ii) Teaching of basic sciences. and homoeopathy by registered medical practitioners in any school . college or institution.

V. Contravention of the Pharmacopoeia.

A Homoeopath must carry out his / her obligations under the provisions of Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia as under Section 36 of the Unani, Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic Practitioners Act, 1965, penalties may be incurred through failure to observe the provisions thereof.

VI. Code of Professional Conduct.

The following paragraphs explain the major and more common features of professional life and conduct.

(a) Premises and Door-plates.

Professional premises should not be located in buildings like commercial chemists shops. In special circumstances especially where entirely separate, this might be within ethical bounds.

A door-plate may be placed on professional premises and the residence of the practitioner. The plate should be unostentatious and may include qualifications invariably indicating authority granting it. A higher qualification may be used but indications of specialty should be avoided. Provided, however, if a homoeopath restricts himself / herself to a particular type of work he / she can use the words specialist in "XYZ" etc. The same principles apply to telephone and other directories and prescription form. A homoeopath should not put up a plate on a house in which he / she does not live or a house in which he / she proposes to occupy at some future date or at a house used by him / her for the sole purpose of receiving messages.

(b) Change of Address or Conditions of Practice.

Any change of address, or practice hours or of circumstances such as a change to specialty with the transfer of patients to a partner, may be communicated, under cover, to patients of the practitioner but no newspaper or other public announcement may be made. This must be observed even when a rumour or an ill-informed newspaper statement appears to demand correction in the interest of the homoeopath or his patients. There is no objection to a suitable notice being placed in the waiting room. Similarly, a consultant commencing practice in a new area

may notify the fact to any practitioner in the area who might reasonably be expected to be interested.

(c) **Relations with other Registered Practitioners.**

(1) A practitioner when setting up practice should pay a courtesy call upon other practitioners in the neighborhood. in big towns say within a radious of half a mile , but in more sparsely populated districts over a wider area.

(2) Every attending homoeopath should endeavor to observe punctuality in consultation appointments. If attending homoeopath has not arrived within a reasonable time (e.g. a quarter of an hour after the appointed hour) the consultant homoeopath shall be at liberty to see the patient alone, and should leave his conclusions in writing in a closed envelope.

(3) The duty of announcing to the patient's friends the result of consultation should be mutually arranged between the attendant and consultant.

(4) Differences of opinion, should not be divulged unnecessarily; but when there is an irreconcilable difference of opinion the circumstances should be frankly and impartially explained to the patient's friends. It is open to them to seek further advice, either, as is preferable , in consultation with those already in attendance or with the medical attendant only.

(5) The attendance of a consulting practitioner should cease the consultation is concluded, unless another appointment is arranged by the attendant.

(6) When it becomes the duty of a practitioner occupying an official position to see and report upon a case of illness or injury he should, as a matter of courtesy , whenever practicable communicate with the practitioner in attendance so as to give him the option of being present. The practitioner seeing the case officially should scrupulously avoid interference with, or remarks upon , the treatment or diagnosis that has been adopted.

(7) When a consultant in his / her room sees a patient at the request of his / her attendant, it is his / her duty to write to the latter stating his / her opinion of the case with the mode of treatment he / she thinks should be adopted.

(8) A homoeopath called upon in an emergency to visit a patient who under ordinary circumstances would have been attended by his / her own attendant, should , when the emergency is provided for, retire in favour of the ordinary attendant, but shall be entitled or charge the patient for his / her services.

(9) When a practitioner is called to a case of obstetric emergency during the temporary absence for any cause of the proper medical attendant he / she should cease his / her attendance when the emergency has been provided for, or on the arrival of the proper attendant, but if in the meantime he / she has assisted at the patient`s delivery or has been detained for a considerable time, he / she shall be entitled to receive a portion of the fee. Nevertheless the emergency practitioner shall be entitled to attend on a subsequent confinement if asked to do so; but he / she should obtain the consent of the original attendant before doing so.

(10) When a homoeopath is consulted by a patient whom he / she has previously attended during the course of the same illness at the request of another practitioner, he / she may propose a consultation with the said practitioner, but should decline to take charge of the case, except by mutual agreement.

(11) When homoeopath is requested to attend a patient whom he / she knows to be already under the care of another practitioner (the case not being one of emergency he / she should , as far as possible, do so, in consultation with the practitioner in attendance.

(12) When a practitioner is consulted at his / her own clinic it is not necessary for him / her to enquire if the patient is under the care of another practitioner, but if that fact transpires the interest of the patient or courtesy may require that attendant be informed of the consultation and its result.

(d) **Association with Unregistered Practitioners or Unqualified Persons.**

(1) No homoeopath should meet in consultation or enter into medical partnership with any practitioner who is not registered or listed.

(2) A practitioner may arrange for a qualified and registered nurse to attend . to do dressing under his / her care but he / she must not delegate to the nurse the task of examining patients or replacing him / her in any way in his / her proper duties. On no account an unregistered nurse or an unregistered midwife shall be engaged.

(e) **Fees and Commission.**

(1) A scale of fees should not be publicly exhibited.

(2) There are no fixed fees in the medical profession. if by that expression is meant a tariff regulated by some recognised rules to which either a patient or a practitioner can appeal: but there are customary fees which very with the place . the status of the practitioner and other circumstances. Fees are reducible at the discretion of the practitioner.

(3) There is no rule that medical practitioners should not charge one another for their services. but it should be regarded as a pleasure and privilege to give one's services free to a professional brother. his wife and children or to a medical student.

(4) Any undisclosed division or sharing of fees. other than in a normal medical partnership. whether by means of commission or any other arrangement. is highly improper. and. in certain circumstances. illegal.

(5) No homoeopath should receive commission from trades people in return for recommending to their wares. or from dentists. pathologists radiologists and other workers in special fields of medicine or surgery nor should he /she pay commission to hotel proprietors. lodging house keepers, taxi-drivers and tonga drivers. nurses. midwives. chemists and others for introduction to cases.

(6) No patient should be attended to on the basis of contract i.e. , on terms of "no cure" no fee".

(f). **Refusal to Continue to Attend a Patient.**

A homoeopath is justified in refusing to continue attendance on a case :-

(a) Where he / she finds another practitioner is in professional attendance.

(b) Where remedies other than those prescribed by him / her are being used.

(c) Where his / her remedies are refused and or his / her instructions are not carried out.

(d) Where he / she is convinced that the illness is an imposture and he / she is being made a party to false pretense.

(e) Where the patient persists in the abuse of opium, alcohol, or similar poisons.

(f) Where a consultant has agreed to be called in at the express desire of the patient or his / her relatives but is not sent for because of latter subsequently changing their minds.

(g) Where the patient refuses to pay his / her usual fees.

A practitioner is not in any way bound to give up a case because he / she cannot cure it, so long as the patient desires his / her services.

(g) **Patent drugs, Secret remedies and Chemists**.

(1) Care should be taken in using or encouraging the use of patent or proprietary foods before recommending or sanctioning them. The practitioner should acquire some general knowledge of their composition and evidence that their claim to be wholesome and serviceable is well founded.

(2) It is a grave breach of professional proprietary for a medical practitioner to take any part in the manufacture or sale of a proprietary food etc. or to have his / her name in any way associated with it. Medical men / women should also be cautious how they lend themselves to the puffing off these articles.

(3) No medical practitioner should write prescriptions in a private formula or code of which only a particular person or pharmacist has the knowledge. Such secret prescriptions are unprofessional.

(4) No medical practitioner should have a shop for sale of medicines, medical appliances, etc., or style his / her dispensary in such a way as to cause it to be taken for commercial shop.

(5) No medical practitioner should enter into any compact with pharmacist to receive a share in the profits accruing from the sale of medicines prescribed or medical appliances.

(6) A practitioner should not write testimonials for commercial products unless a legal guarantee is given that his / her opinions will not be published.

(h) **Advertising and Canvassing.**

(1) A practitioner must not do, nor allow to be done , any act which might be constructed so means of attracting to himself / herself patients whether or not they are already patients of another practitioner.

(2) The display of cards in club premises, hotels, shops , etc.. is highly improper; as also is the inclusion of name or photograph of practitioner in papers, pamphlets or circulars relating to any institution.

(i) **Lectures, Broadcasting and Television.**

(1) The announcement of lectures to be given by a homoeopath should not, in any way , be laudatory to him / her.

(2) It is held at present to be desirable that medical broadcasters shall be anonymous.

(j) **Publications.**

It is desirable that members of the profession should, if occasion arises, engage in publishing matter suitable for the lay reader either in the form of newspaper articles or books. In so doing the practitioner must hold himself / herself responsible for any undue or improper self - advertisement. Whereas the identity of the author may properly made known, his / her address or photograph should not be published . any appointment he may hold should not be mentioned and no suggestion of his / her possessing any special skill should be made. Steps should taken to ensure that no editorial or preface should be made which laudatory to the author. It has always been stressed that, whereas an occasional article or letter in newspaper may not offend, yet the undue frequency of such publication may arouse suspicion as to the intentions of the author. There should be no identification the patient concerned.

(k) **Professional Secrecy.**

(1) A practitioner should not disclose voluntarily, without the consent of the patient, preferably written, information which he / she has obtained in the course of his / her professional relationship with the patient. This includes information concerning criminal abortion, venereal disease, attempted suicide and concealed birth. The State has no right to demand information except where notification is required by Statutes such as in infectious diseases. In a Court of Law professional secrecy should be contravened only under protest after direction from the presiding Judge.

(2) There are, however, occasions where the disclosure of venereal disease might be considered justified in the interests of innocent parties who might suffer from the withholding of such information. It would be improper to keep secret the fact that a nursemaid-in-charge of young children was suffering from gonorrhoea.

(3) An obvious pitfall for the homoeopath in disclosure of information is where an employer rings up for information regarding one of his / her employees. No information should be given without consent of the patient.

Where a patient presents himself / herself for examination for an insurance policy, his / her consent to disclosure of the findings to the company may be regarded as implied. The examiner should report the condition and findings but should give no opinion as to whether or not any abnormality or disease is caused by misconduct.

(I) **The Practitioner should be Guided by the Following .**

(1) It is the duty of a homoeopath as a citizen to assist the public health authorities in carrying out the provisions of the Public Health Act especially with regard to notification of infectious diseases.

(2) A homoeopath is under an obligation to his /her patient to preserve his / her secrets, and in legal matters should, except with the patient's consent, answer questions only at the express direction of the Judge or Magistrate presiding in a Court of Law.

A homoeopath is not bound to answer questions put to him / her by policemen, solicitors, vakils, or other non-judicial persons.

(3) No homoeopath should volunteer to give a statement in a Court of Law against any person who had been under his / her professional care. He / she should only appear on summons.

(m) **Termination of Pregnancy.**

This should only be purely on medical grounds and it is essential to obtain a confirmatory second opinion before recommending or undertaking such action.

(n) **Nursing Homes.**

1. If a practitioner has financial interest in a nursing home and has occasion to advise a patient to enter or obtain treatment from that nursing home, he must acquaint the patient of his financial interest in the institution.

2. An advertisement for nursing home which provides medical advice and treatment should be in the medical press only.

3. In advertisements in the medical press for nursing homes or other therapeutic institutions, no laudatory statement regarding either the member of medical staff or the form of treatment given, should be permitted. There is no objection, however, to the names and qualifications of the homoeopaths being given but their addresses or consulting hours should be avoided.

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