



Standards of Professional Practice and Code of Ethics of the Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association Inc.

Preamble

ANZATA Code of Ethics articulates and promotes the ethical principles and sets specific standard to guide both arts therapists and members of the public to a clear understanding and expectation of what is considered ethical professional conduct by arts therapists.

Codes of professional associations should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and functional in the face of the evolution of the relevant associations and changes in its environment. Since its inception, these codes have been reviewed and this current Code has been developed in light of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between ANZATA and ACATA at the Annual General Meeting in Singapore in October 2014.

The Code is built on three general ethical principles:

- A. Professional responsibility
- B. Confidentiality
- C. Responsibility to arts therapy colleagues

Arts therapists are committed to the absolute welfare of their clients and to the preservation of their human rights and privileges. This document is based upon that commitment. The following ethical principles serve as a guideline for the professional conduct of arts therapists, to ensure propriety and integrity towards a high standard of arts therapy practice. This Code affirms the ardent pursuit of professionally responsible actions and the appraisal of ethical issues and their implications, so that arts therapists provide services that are ethically sound and therefore in the best interest of our clients. ANZATA recognises the ability of all art forms to enrich and enhance our lives. The mission of ANZATA is to lead the profession of arts therapy in Australasia and South-East Asia. The Association attends to ethical standards of professional regulation and registration. ANZATA has a category of professional membership for individuals who have completed an equivalent Masters degree in any arts modality, which complies with the training standards of ANZATA.

Purpose of the Code of Ethics

The purpose of the Code is:

- To establish minimum standards of ethical practice for all ANZATA Members;
- To identify the value, principles and responsibilities of all Members;
- To promote a professional level of competence and accountability in the field of arts therapy;
- To provide a guideline for clients, employers and professionals of what constitutes ANZATA ethical practice;
- To outline the complaints procedure regarding unethical conduct of a member.

Ethical practice encumbers all areas including clinical or therapeutic practice, research, teaching, supervision, publication and any other professional undertakings. The Code is an evolving document that is intended to reflect professional and community values about the practice of arts therapy. Each general principle is accompanied by an explanatory statement that assists arts therapists and other to understand how the principle is enacted in the form of specific standards of professional conduct. The ethical standards derived from each general principle provide the minimum expectation with

regard to arts therapists' professional conduct, and conduct in their capacity as Members of ANZATA. It is recommended that the Code of Ethics be read in collaboration with all other ANZATA documents and resources to achieve an overall insight to all areas of professional practice (see website – www.anzata.org – for a full list of documents).

Definitions and Acronyms

1. **Arts therapy** refers to creative modalities used by trained therapists and may include visual art, clay work, dance or movement, music, narrative or story telling, drama/psychodrama, creative writing, poetry and sandplay therapies.
2. **Arts therapist** refers to an individual who provides any arts therapy based services in various roles including clinical practice/private practice, educator, supervisor and researcher or as a provider or manager of any of these services.
3. **Client** refers to individual, couples, families, groups or communities as a recipient of an arts therapy service
4. **Code** refers to this 2015 Code as amended from time to time and includes the definitions and interpretation, the application of the Code all general principles and the ethical standards
5. **Conduct** refers to any act or omission
 - a) by arts therapists that others may reasonably consider to be an arts therapy service
 - b) outside their practice of arts therapy with casts doubt on their competence and ability to practise as arts therapists
 - c) outside their practice of arts therapy which harms public trust in the discipline or the profession of arts therapy
 - d) in their capacity as Members of the Association as applicable in the circumstances.
6. **Conflict of interest** refers to any situation where a member may be in (or potentially be in) a position of being involved in a decision or action where they may not be perceived to be able to put the client's well-being first.
7. **Informed consent** refers to verbal and written permission given by an individual in full knowledge of the possible risks and benefits. Informed consent is sought from a minor or adult unable to give consent. Consent can only be given by a parent or authorised guardian on behalf of a minor or adult unable to given consent themselves. A person giving informed consent has a right to withdraw consent at any time.
8. **Member** refers to any member of the Association
9. **Multiple relationships** occur when an arts therapist giving a therapeutic service to a client, also is or has been
 - a) in a non-professional relationship with the same client;
 - b) in a different professional relationship with the same client;
 - c) in a non-professional relationship with an associated party; or
 - d) a recipient of a service provided by the same client.
10. **Peoples** are defined as distinct human groups with their own social and cultural structures who are linked by a common identity, common customs and collective interests.
11. **Professional relationship** refers to the relationship between the arts therapist and the client, which involves the delivery of an arts therapy service.
12. **The Process** refers to the processes involved in the provision and delivery of an arts therapy service to a client. The process includes but is not limited to: the quality of the arts therapy relationship, the setting and the materials utilised.
13. **Supervisor** refers to professional arts therapy or counselling supervision (as distinct from line management).

Acronyms

ANZATA – Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association

Principle I: Professional Responsibility

1. Arts therapists are expected to support and further the goals of the profession by acting with integrity in maintaining the highest standards of arts therapy practice.
2. Arts therapists shall seek to be informed about the significance of respecting, understanding and the meanings of indigenous cultures in their work. This includes the meaning and implications of the Treaty of Waitangi and the principles of protection, participation and partnership with Maori people of New Zealand. In Australia arts therapists recognise the unique position of Aboriginal people in Australian culture and history. Arts therapists recognise that Aboriginal people are the original Custodians of the Land.
3. Arts therapists recognise and respect cultural differences and diversity among people, and oppose discrimination and oppressive behaviour.
4. Arts therapists will abide by the ethical standards of their professional association in all work settings, whether employed by government/ non-government agencies or self-employed.
5. Arts therapists abide by the laws of the society in which they practice.
6. Arts therapists will only provide assessment, treatment and professional advice for which they are formally qualified, as recognised by their level of professional memberships and registrations.
7. Arts therapists will present themselves as arts therapy professionals, and will never misrepresent their credentials in education, experience, affiliations or advertising.
8. Arts therapists shall not exploit their clients financially. They are required to be honest, straightforward and accountable in all financial matters and to keep accurate records concerning their clients and other professionals.
9. Arts therapists are responsible for setting and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. This includes avoiding any situations that compromise a sense of objectivity, and/or presents a conflict of interests. They must not engage in dual relationships (e.g. personal or business relationships with clients).
10. Arts therapists are prohibited from exploiting clients, past or present, in a financial, sexual, emotional or any other way.
11. Arts therapists contribute to promoting arts therapy to the professional community of related health workers and to the general public, acting to expand arts therapy opportunities for all appropriate client populations.
12. When an arts therapist offers arts therapy workshops, presentations, growth groups etc., they must make it clear to participants whether the activity is has a therapeutic or educational intention. They must ensure the well-being of the participants by providing therapeutic assistance if needed during or following the art therapy experience.
13. When it is apparent that the arts therapist is unable to be of professional help to a client, the arts therapist should not start treatment or should terminate treatment if it has already begun, while offering help in seeking satisfactory alternative services for the client.
14. Arts therapists end treatment in a responsible manner when, the therapist and client agree that the client has gained as much as possible, and /or that the treatment goals have been achieved and that termination of arts therapy is a logical extension of the therapeutic process.
15. Arts therapists must guard against fostering a dependent relationship with clients and are clear at the outset about therapeutic aims and the duration of the therapy.
16. It is an expectation that arts therapists have regular supervision and use such supervision to develop arts therapy skills, monitor performance and provide accountability for practice. Where possible, supervision should be from an experienced professional arts therapist.

17. Arts therapists will seek counsel from their supervisors, colleagues, and experts in a particular therapeutic area, to serve the best interests of their clients.
18. Arts therapists are obligated to maintain continuing professional education, which includes seminars/ conferences/ reading/teaching etc. To continue to relate to all aspects of being an arts therapist including the need to maintain a personal creative practice (see Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the website – www.anzata.org).
19. Arts therapists must engage in appropriate information and advertising activities, which enable the public to make informed choices in relation to professional services.
20. Arts therapists who advertise their services should limit advertising to a statement of name, address, qualifications and type of therapy offered and such statements should be descriptive and not evaluative.
21. Arts therapists must accurately represent their professional competence, education, training and experience ensuring that all advertisements and publications, whether in directories, business cards, newspapers or conveyed through any medium accurately convey services so that clients can make an informed decision about therapy.
22. Arts therapists must not mislead the public about their identity or status.
23. Arts therapists must not mislead or deceive the public in any use any professional identification, including qualifications and experience and must correct, whenever possible, false, misleading or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning qualifications and services.
24. Arts therapists must only represent themselves as specialising within a specific area of arts therapy if they have undertaken further education, training, or experience which would enable them to practice in that speciality area.
25. Arts therapists must follow the ANZATA guidelines on use of the Association logo.

Principle II: Confidentiality

Arts therapists have a primary responsibility to respect and honour client confidentiality and to safeguard all written, taped and visual information gained during the course of therapy.

1. In both individual and group therapy, and prior to the commencement of arts therapy, arts therapists are obliged to inform clients of their right to confidentiality.
2. All information obtained during the course of treatment, be it verbal, written, taped or visual is shared only with the arts therapist's supervisor and where necessary, with the appropriate professionals concerned with the client's case.
3. Arts therapists must obtain each and every client's written permission before any verbal, written, taped or visual information is shared, outside of that mentioned in Point 2. When permission has been given by the client, the arts therapist must remove all identifying information, ensure that content revealed is accurate and unbiased and directly relates to the client's therapeutic relationship with the therapist.
4. The arts therapist takes the necessary precautions to protect the confidences of clients who are minors, or other clients who are unable to give voluntary informed consent, due to impairments which might limit comprehension or communication.
5. Arts therapists may breach confidentiality without client consent when mandated by law, or when the client's mental and emotional state clearly indicates an immediate danger to the client and/or others. In such cases, the arts therapist must act in accordance with the law, while at all times respecting the client's dignity.
6. Arts therapists must keep adequate records (notes, artwork/photos) for a minimum of seven years following the date of last contact. Records regarding children should be kept until the child attains the age of 25. The keeping of ANZATA records is to be for seven years. All client

material, whether written, art, audio or other, must be kept in a secure location until disposed of appropriately, ensuring ongoing confidentiality at every stage of the process.

7. In order to preserve the integrity of the professional field, arts therapists should inform the Association of persons using the title of arts therapist, who are either unqualified and/or unregistered with an Arts Therapy Association, so that an ethics sub-committee member can contact the person and discuss the Association's concerns and options for training and/or membership.
8. Arts therapists have a responsibility to ensure that imagery created during the period of therapy be safeguarded. No photographs or exhibitions of client artwork are to be represented and no images of client's or client artwork are to be posted on social network sites unless written and verbal informed consent has been obtained from the client concerned or, if under 18, their parent/carer/guardian. In addition, this requirement also applies to students and trainees who may need examples of case studies for education or supervision purposes.

Principle III: Responsibility to Arts Therapy Colleagues

1. Arts therapists are respectful in their regard for colleagues, both within and outside the arts therapy profession.
2. Arts therapists cooperate with and support other arts therapy colleagues. They are committed to the development of arts therapy practice and issues which arise for arts therapists as a professional group.
3. When deemed appropriate, arts therapists will refer clients to other therapeutic services, which may better suit the client's needs.
4. Arts therapists do not offer professional services to individuals receiving arts therapy from another arts therapist unless agreed by all parties.
5. In conducting research, arts therapists officially acknowledge all colleagues/administrators and other professionals who have contributed to their research efforts. Before embarking on research in an agency, organisation or institution, arts therapists provide adequate information about the research and obtain formal permission from the appropriate authorities.
6. If an arts therapist becomes aware of an ethical violation by an arts therapy colleague, an attempt to informally resolve the issue should be considered first. The ANZATA Ethics and Standards of Practice Sub-Committee should be notified if:
 - a) an arts therapist does not wish to make an informal approach him/herself; or
 - b) the ethical violation cannot be resolved informally; or
 - c) the ethical violation is of a serious nature.
7. If there is a formal complaint made to ANZATA regarding the professional practice of an arts therapist, the formal complaint will be presented to The Ethics and Standards Sub-Committee of ANZATA. This sub-committee will follow the 'Procedures Regarding The Ethical Standards for Arts Therapists' document. Arts therapists found to be in serious violation of the Code of Ethics may be subject to expulsion from the Association.