



SHIATSU SOCIETY OF IRELAND CODE OF ETHICS AND PRACTICE

FOREWARD

The Shiatsu Society of Ireland (“the Society”) was founded in 1989 as a professional body to establish and maintain standards of professional practice in which members can take pride and in what their clients can have confidence.

Registered Practitioners of the Shiatsu Society of Ireland (designated R.P.S.S.I.) have been assessed by the Accreditation Panel established for that purpose as being adequately trained, professionally competent and personally suitable to practice Shiatsu as a therapy.

Registered Practitioners are required to make themselves familiar with and to accept the code of ethics and practice.

As well as Registered Practitioner members, the Society includes Ordinary members, defined in the Constitution of the Society as “those interested in Shiatsu but not yet ready or qualified for Registered Practitioner membership”.

INTRODUCTION

This code of ethics and practice (henceforth referred to as The Code”) serves both as information for the public and a reminder to the practitioner of the high standards of practice expected and the vigilance required to maintain them.

As a condition of membership of the Society, all Registered Practitioners agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Practice. The Society will endeavour to deal with any reasonable concern or complaint about any Registered Practitioner brought to its attention sympathetically and fairly. Concerns/complaints about student members who have not yet been assessed by the Society as to their competence to practise cannot be dealt with formally, but we will endeavour to do so informally.

It is the duty of students/graduates who are members of the Society to inform clients of their status at the outset.

TO PRACTITIONERS AND STUDENTS

The Code provides a guide to professional standards for all Registered Practitioners of the Shiatsu Society of Ireland (R.P.S.S.I.) and third-year students or graduates of shiatsu schools who accept remuneration in exchange for shiatsu with a view to professional registration. Public trust and confidence in the profession is dependent on its practitioners not only acting responsibly but being accountable.

The intention is to provide guidelines by which individual members may judge particular situations, rather than a catalogue of behaviour where non-observance is inevitable regarded as professional misconduct.

Professional misconduct is conduct which is considered by experienced and competent practitioners of good repute to be unacceptable, disgraceful or dishonourable.

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

Membership of the Register of Practitioners of the Shiatsu Society of Ireland is conditional on evidence of professional insurance. Acceptance for assessment as a potential member of the Register is also conditional on evidence of professional insurance.



A DEFINITION OF SHIATSU

The following expresses the Society's understanding of the parameters of Shiatsu: Shiatsu, meaning thumb pressure, is a touch therapy rooted in Japanese and Chinese medical theory, which aims to promote the self-healing and personal development of the recipient.

By connecting with points and meridians (as also used in acupuncture), it enhances the natural flow of life force or *ki* through the body, thus relieving energy blockages which may arise due to physical, mental, emotional or physical stress.

GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE

These guidelines are based on our understanding of Shiatsu as a means of stimulating and supporting the receiver's own inbuilt ability to heal, so that the relationship between giver and receiver is a mutual and equal partnership built on mutual respect and trust.

1. The Therapist/Client Relationship

1.1 Practitioners may exercise discretion in accepting clients for treatment.

1.2 Practitioners shall recognise and respect the uniqueness and dignity of each client.

1.3 Practitioners may offer treatment to potential clients but it is not permissible to solicit a client by any form of inducement or pressure.

1.4 Practitioners must act with consideration concerning fees and justification for treatment.

1.5 Practitioners are expected to be exemplary of their profession in their personal hygiene, simplicity, and suitability of attire and avoidance of excess of food, drink or other substances in preparation for meeting clients.

Practitioners should also aim to be adequately rested and centred before treating clients. If personal circumstances beyond one's control interfere with this, practitioners need to be mindful of this and make a decision as to whether it is appropriate to go ahead with treatment or not and inform the client accordingly.

1.6 The practitioner's premises or clinic should be maintained in such a condition as to reflect credit on the profession of Shiatsu and should be as clean and comfortable an environment as possible.

1.7 When using public premises, the practitioner or teacher must be aware of health and safety regulations including public liability insurance.

1.8 Before commencing treatment, the practitioner must ascertain that s/he has the informed consent of the client (or parent, guardian, or person *in loco parentis* in the case of minors) ensuring that the client (or parent, guardian, or person *in loco parentis* in the case of minors) is aware and understands the nature of the treatment to be given.

The practitioner shall also be attentive to non-verbal signals from the client, be they adult or child which may indicate a lack of real consent or withdrawal of consent. In such cases, s/he should desist and/or consult with the client before continuing treatment. The client may withdraw consent at any time.



1.9 The practitioner's primary obligation is towards the client and as all times must practice his/her skills to the best of his/her ability for the benefit of the client. S/he should ensure that no action or omission on his/her part or within his/her sphere of responsibility is detrimental to the interests, conditions or safety of the client.

Care should be taken in distinguishing to the client between professional recommendations and expressions of personal opinion.

1.10 Criteria for recommendations are that they are adequately explained and can be proceeded with safely with a view to furthering the client's process of healing and informing the client of ways of helping him/herself to better health.

1.11 The client has the right to refuse any aspect of treatment or disregard advice and this right should be brought to his/her attention.

1.12 The client is entitled to trust in the practitioner's integrity and it is the duty of practitioners not to abuse this trust in any way. The focus of the practitioner's behaviour should at all times be on the client's healing process.

Any form of sexual advance to a client with whom there exists a professional relationship is professional misconduct. It is important to be aware of the power which your position as a practitioners gives you and that this power can be used to support or to undermine the client.

You need to be aware both of your own vulnerabilities and those of the client, as strong emotions can emerge in treatment. Cultivate loving detachment. In difficult situations, it may be advisable to seek the help, support and guidance of a senior colleague in confidence. Your client should be informed that you are so doing.

If a situation develops where you feel unable to remain within the bounds of an appropriate relationship between practitioner and client as understood in this code, you must terminate treatment forthwith and refer the client for professional treatment elsewhere.

1.13 The practitioner shall respect the confidentiality of the therapeutic relationship and shall not divulge any information about a client to anyone other than another therapist when transferring a client and this must be with the client's consent, except when required by law.

Exceptions to this are:

- a) The use of case histories in teaching
- b) The use of cases histories for publication (in both these cases, pseudonyms or other forms of identification must be used to protect client anonymity unless the client chooses otherwise).

1.14 No practitioner may disclose publicly the name of a present or past client, or use any medium, for example, photograph/s, which could enable any client, or use any medium, for example photograph/s, which could enable any client to be identified, without the written permission of the client.

1.15 The practitioner shall keep accurate records of all clients and treatments given. These records shall be kept for 12 years. In the event of a practitioner moving away or ceasing practice altogether, records must be handed over to his/her successor. In the event of there being no registered practitioner of the Society to which such records can be transferred, the records should be forwarded to the Society where they will be held for 12 years and then destroyed.



1.16 A proper register (card index or other suitable means) should be set up to register each client's name, address and other relevant information including dates of attendance. Such records should be kept secure and private and retained for 12 years.

1.17 Adequate records should be maintained so that continuity of client care is possible and case history information can be made available to another practitioner in case of referral. Records should include updated progress reports and records of referral.

Notes should be kept of other treatments received, results of medical tests and anything which may affect the course of treatment and the client's well-being of which s/he makes you aware, whether spontaneously or through questioning.

1.18 Practitioners should work in a co-operative manner with colleagues and where appropriate, other healthcare professionals and recognise and respect their particular contribution to the client's wellbeing.

1.19 The practitioner shall not countermand instructions or prescriptions given by a medical doctor or other healthcare professional.

While maintaining all due respect for other treatment modalities and the client's choice of same, client concerns if voluntarily expressed, should be addressed and the client encouraged to discuss any doubts or questions about treatment with the practitioner concerned, so that s/he can make an informed decision as to continuing treatment.

1.20 The practitioner shall not recommend any course of action outside his/her particular competence, such as to undergo an operation or to take specific drugs. It must be left to the client to make their own decision in the light of medical advice.

1.21 If the practitioner believes that s/he has identified a condition which may require medical attention and which has not already been medically diagnosed, s/he shall bring this to the attention of the client and recommend that s/he seek medical opinion.

1.22 Clients may be treated with Shiatsu in hospital only in consultation with and by agreement with those responsible for the client's medical care in hospital.

Practitioners should make every effort to inform the medical team responsible for their client of the client's responses to shiatsu treatment, both positive and negative. Clear and informative records should be kept and made available in writing.

1.23 The consent of a parent, legal guardian, or person in loco parentis must be obtained in respect of any person under 16 years of age. Where it comes to a practitioner's attention that a child requires conventional treatment, the parent, legal guardian, or person in loco parentis should be so advised and a written acknowledgement of such advice be obtained and kept.

2. Teaching

All Registered Practitioners are considered by the Society as being capable of giving introductory courses in Shiatsu to members of the public for use with family and friends.

However, Recognised Teachers of Shiatsu are those whom the Accreditation Panel of the Society has assessed as being capable of teaching Shiatsu to professional level. They appear on the Register with (T) after their name.



The following, in addition to 1.3 above and the general principles contained in Section 1 as a whole, applies to both levels of teaching:-

2.1 Teachers shall be mindful of the power invested in them by their students, shall not abuse the trust placed in them and shall at all times act with integrity.

2.2 Teachers shall not teach anything that might endanger the students or the people on whom they may practice.

2.3 The syllabus of a Shiatsu course shall be consistent with the definition of Shiatsu given above.

2.4 Teachers and Schools shall cover the material as advertised prior to the course/s.

2.5 Respect for confidentiality between teacher and student does not preclude the disclosure of confidential information to legitimately interested colleagues involved in the evaluation of the student, where this information is relevant.

2.6 Discussion of students by teachers with their professional colleagues should be purposeful.

2.7 Teachers should be particularly aware of the fire regulations and emergence procedures when using a public space.

3. Advertising/Promotion

3.1 Advertising should not make claims for Shiatsu beyond what is stated above under the heading **A DEFINITION OF SHIATSU**.

3.2 Registered practitioners may advertise their practice provided that the wording does not make specific claims for cures, does not bring Shiatsu into disrepute, and is in keeping with the integrity of the Shiatsu Society and its members.

3.3 All advertisements and notices should contain the Society's registered qualifications of the member (R.P.S.S.I.) and members are required to ensure that their advertisements appear only under headings appropriate to the ethical practice of Shiatsu.

3.4 No registered practitioner may imply or state that the practice or service s/he is offering is better than that offered by and other registered practitioner or make detrimental comparisons between practitioners, teachers or schools.

3.5 Only professional certificates and diplomas originating from bona fide organisations and schools or colleges may be displayed where the practitioner practices.

3.6 Contributions to newspapers, journals, professional papers and other published works may appear under a member's name and qualifications, subject to compliance with 1.14 above.

3.7 Shiatsu practitioners may not use their professional qualifications in their commercialisation of any product or remedy.

4. The Shiatsu Practitioner and Colleagues

4.1 No member may attempt by any means to entice a client to leave another Shiatsu Practitioner in order to become his/her client.



4.2 Members should be aware when they represent Shiatsu to others that they are not just representing themselves and should not imply criticism of the work or practice of another member, whether in writing or verbally before clients or the general public.



5. Continuing Education

5.1 Practitioners need to maintain their level of skills and knowledge of best current practice. This can be achieved through reading, attending courses and meeting with colleagues for the exchange of both ideas and hands-on practice. This also applies to teachers.

5.2 In the event of returning to professional practice after a period of absence, the practitioner shall be conscientious in ensuring that his/her skills are up to professional standards before accepting clients.

The Society has established guidelines in relation to this, and may query the practitioner if in any doubt as to the adequacy of his/her preparation for return to practice. If not satisfied, the Society may withdraw or refuse Registered Practitioner status.

Dated this 4th day of November 2021