

ciples that should guide the members of the medical profession in course of their practice of medicine and their dealings with their patients and other members of the profession.

The term **MEDICAL ETIQUETTE** is essentially limited within the mutual relationship between members of the medical profession. It actually means the sense of courtesy and respect that should govern the conduct and relationship between the members of the medical profession.

The history of the first use of the code of ethics in the practice of medicine can be traced as back as in the 5th and 6th century B.C. (sometime between 460 - 377 B.C, the accepted life period of the 'Father Medicine', Hippocrates). Hippocrates recommended certain principles for those who choose to practice medicine. The new practitioner in the form of an oath accepts these principles.

The Hippocratic Oath is perhaps one of the oldest codes of medical ethics known to the medical profession. Although 25 centuries old its basic principles are equally valid today. The world medical association has simplified the Hippocratic oath and it is now termed as the 'Declaration of Geneva' upon which the International Code of Medical Ethics is based. This declaration is adopted by medical councils in India.

The Medical profession today is mainly guided by the ethical principles laid down by Hippocrates, the Greek Physician, who is also called the 'Father of Medicine'. The ideal of service to the community was deeply ingrained amongst the ancient Greeks. This attitude is depicted in Hippocrates' writings and is beautifully expressed in his famous saying "Where there is a love of humanity, there will be the love of the profession (medical)". The Hippocratic Oath

reproduced below contains the Code of Ethics for the medical profession which has guided us for the last 25 centuries and continues to do so. Gomperz calls it a movement of the highest rank in the history of civilization.

THE OATH OF HIPPOCRATES

I swear by Apollo the physician, by Asclepius, by Health, by Panacea, and by all the Gods and goddesses, making them witnesses, that I will carry out, according to my ability and judgment, this oath and this indenture.

To regard my teacher in this art as my own parents; to make him a partner in my livelihood; when he is in need of money to share mine with him; to consider his offspring as my own brother; to teach them this art if they require to learn it, without fee or indenture.

To impart precept, oral instructions, and all other learning to my sons, to the sons of my teachers, and to pupils who have signed the indenture and sworn obedience to the physician's law, but none other. I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but I will never use it to injure or wrong them.

I will never give poison to anyone though asked to do, nor will I suggest such a plan.

Similarly, I will not give a pessary to a woman to cause abortion. But in purity and holiness, I will guard my life and my art. I will not use the knife either on sufferers from stone, but I will give place to such as are craftsmen therein.

Into whatsoever houses I enter, I will do so to help the sick, keeping myself from all intentional wrong doing and harm especially from fornication with woman or man, bond or free.

Whatsoever in the course of practice I see or

hear (or even outside my practice in social intercourse) that ought never to be published abroad, I will not divulge but consider such things to be holy secrets. Now, if I keep this oath and break it not, may I enjoy the honor in my life and art, among all men for all time; but if I transgress foreswear myself, may the opposite befall me.

THE DECLARATION OF GENEVA—1948

The World Medical Association at its third general Assembly at Geneva in September 1948 adapted certain codes of ethics to be taken at the time of entering the medical profession. I solemnly pledge myself to consecrate my life to the service of humanity. I will give my teachers, the

The health of my patient will be my first consideration.

I will respect the secrets that are confided in me.

I will maintain by all means in my power the honor and the noble traditions of the medical profession. My colleagues will be my brothers.

I will not permit considerations of religion, nationality, race, politics or social standing to intervene between my duty and my patient.

I will maintain the utmost respect for human life from the time of conception.

Even under threat, I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity. I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honor.

Section 12 of the Geneva Convention Act prohibits the use of the following by any doctor:

The emblem of the Red Cross with vertical and horizontal arms of the same length on, and completely surrounded by a white background, or the designation 'Red Cross' or 'Geneva Cross'.

The emblem of a Red Crescent Moon on, and completely surrounded by, white ground, or the designation 'Red Crescent'.

The emblem of Lion in Red, holding erect a scimitar in its raised right paw and a rising sun above the lion's back on a white ground or the designation 'Red Lion and Sun'. The emblem of a white or silver cross with vertical and horizontal arms of equal length on, or surrounded by, red ground, being the emblem of the Swiss Confederation. Any design or wordings which may be mistaken for any of the above mentioned emblems and words.

Section 13 of the same act carries the penalty for the contravention of the above rule, which may be a fine, and forfeiting of any goods on which the emblem or words are displayed.

There has been considerable misuse of the 'Red Cross' emblem, as many of them do, to mark their vehicles or places or places of their practice. Therefore there is no right to Red Cross or allied emblems and a doctor has prohibited the use of these unless permitted by the Government. This right is only for the Medical Corps of the Army.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF HOMOEOPATHIC PRACTICE

Every Homoeopathic Practitioner should do his best for his patient. He is not bound to treat each and every patient who seeks his help except in circumstances or occasions where no alternative medical aid is available to the patient. In ordinary circumstances, a practitioner has the right to choose the patient and lay down the limits of his service. Once he accepts the charge it is his responsibility to exercise due care and diligence in the treatment in accordance with the law of similars according to the direction of Dr. Hahn-

emann and Schussler except for the limitations allowed in the footnote of paragraph 67 of 'Organon'. Undertaking the care of the patient does not imply that the Physician shall be blamed for not being able to cure him. No blame shall be attached if he has employed that skill and professional knowledge which his other colleagues with similar qualifications in the community would be expected to employ.

The Physician's demeanor towards the patient should be courteous, sympathetic, friendly, and helpful.

While keeping the interest of the patient uppermost he should not issue a false certificate and should maintain a correct record of his cases.

Any knowledge about a patient, gained during the course of examination and treatment, is privileged and should not be disclosed without the consent of the patient, or except under an order from the Presiding Judge in a Court of Law, or unless it becomes necessary to protect the welfare of the individual or the community. A Physician should limit his professional bills to the medical services actually rendered by him or under his supervision to the patients. His fee should be commensurate with the services rendered to the patient but may be reduced to suit the patients' ability to pay. Remuneration received by him shall be in the form, and amount specifically announced to the patient at the time the service is rendered. In all other cases, he shall deem it a point of honor to adhere to the compensation for professional services prevailing in the community in which he practices. He should neither pay nor receive, nor offer to give, solicit or receive any gift, gratuity, commission or bonus in consideration for the referring, recommending or procuring of any patient for medical, surgical or other treatment, nor shall

he receive any commission or other benefit from a professional colleague, trader of appliances, dentist or an oculist.

A physician should seek consultation on request in doubtful and difficult cases or whenever it appears to him that the quality of medical service would be enhanced thereby.

STANDARDS OF CHARACTER AND MORALS OF A HOMOEOPATHIC PRACTITIONER

The primary object of the medical profession is to render service to humanity with full respect for the dignity of man; the financial reward is a subordinate consideration. Whosoever chooses this profession assumes the obligation to conduct himself in accordance with its ideals. A practitioner of Homoeopathy shall be an upright man, instructed in the art of healing. He shall keep himself pure in character and be diligent in caring for the sick. He shall be modest, sober, patient and prompt and do his duty without anxiety, and shall be pious and conduct himself with propriety in his profession and in all the actions of his life.

The medical profession expects from its members the highest levels of character and morals, and every practitioner of Homoeopathy owes to the profession and to the public alike a duty to attain such a level. It shall be incumbent on a practitioner of Homoeopathy to be temperate in all matters, for the practice of medicine requires an unremitting exercise of a clear and vigorous mind.

PRACTITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITY

A practitioner of Homoeopathy shall merit the confidence of patients entrusted to his care, rendering to each full measure of service and

devotion. The honored ideals of the medical profession imply that the responsibilities of a practitioner of Homoeopathy extend not only to individuals but also to the entire society.

The following and similar practices which tend to lower the dignity of the profession should be avoided:

Soliciting private practice, either personally or by advertisement in the newspapers, by placards, or by the distribution of circulars, cards or handbills or by giving as commission a percentage of the fees received.

Entering into any contract in his personal capacity with a pharmacist or any manufacturer or firm dealing with medicines or medical or surgical or requisites, to receive a share in the profits arising from the sale of medicines prescribed, or medical or surgical appliances or requisites. He shall not advertise himself through price lists or publicity materials of manufacturing firms or traders, with whom he may be connected in any capacity,

Publishing an advertisement or announcing or making exaggerated claims regarding treatment of any diseases.

Writing prescriptions in a private formula of which only a particular pharmacist has the key. Such secret prescriptions are unprofessional.

Covering a person who is not entitled to practice in this State or entering into any contract with a person who is not entitled to practice and who owns an institution for the treatment of patients by Electrotherapeutics, X-Ray Therapeutics, Vaccine therapy, etc. and receiving a share from the profits of any such business of a medical nature Agreeing to attend on any patient on the terms of "No

cure, no fee'. Exhibiting.

publicly a scale of fees Publishing or sanctioning the publication of letters of thanks from patients; or any kind of laudatory notices with regard to professional matters, with or without photographs, with the object of attracting patients. He shall not publish cases in non-professional newspapers or journals provided it shall be permissible for him to publish his name in connection with a prospectus or a director's or a technical expert's report.

To display an unusually large signboard or writing on it or his prescription paper, anything other than his name, his qualifications and the name of his specialty, if he practices any, his address and the telephone number.

Soliciting of patients directly or indirectly by a practitioner of Homoeopathy either personally or by advertisement in the newspapers, by placards or by the distribution of handbills is unethical. A practitioner of homoeopathy shall not make use of, or permit others to make use of, him or his name as a subject of any form or manner of advertising or publicity through lay channels which shall be of such a character as to invite attention to himself or to his professional position or skill or as would ordinarily result in his self-aggrandizement provided that a practitioner of Homoeopathy is permitted formal announcement in the press about the following matters, namely: -

1. Starting of his practice.
2. Change of type of practice.
3. Change of address. Temporary absence from duty.
4. Resumption of practice.
5. Succeeding to another's practice.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

Medical certificates issued by a homoeopathic practitioner under his signature should not be untrue, misleading, or improper and should correspond strictly with facts within his personal knowledge.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE AND CONSULTATIONS

No member should meet in consultation any practitioner whose name has been removed from the register or the list under section 23 of the Bombay Homoeopathic and Biochemic Practitioners Act, 1959 for infamous conduct in professional respect.

Differences of opinion should not be divulged unnecessarily, the medical attendant should frankly and impartially explain the circumstances to the patient's friends. It is open to them to seek further advice or depend upon their medical attendant only.

The attendance of a consulting practitioner should cease when the consultation is concluded; unless another appointment is arranged by the medical attendant or unless the patient has dispensed with the services of the medical attendant or unless the patient has dispensed with the services of the medical attendant and engaged those of another. In no case shall the consulting practitioner treat the patient alone or hand him over to his assistants or remove him to a nursing home or private hospital without the knowledge of the medical attendant, or injure the latter's position in any respect.

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 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.

When a consultant in his room sees a patient with the respect of a medical practitioner, it is the duty of the latter, to state his opinion of the case with the mode of treatment he thinks should be adopted, and he shall not again see the same patient without a fresh note from his medical attendant.

A member entrusted with the case of the practice of another member during sickness or absence should not charge the absent practitioners for his services, except in the case of a special arrangement between the practitioners. It should be regarded as a pleasure to give one's services freely to a professional brother, his wife or his dependent children or a deserving Homoeopathic medical student.

A medical practitioner is justified in refusing to continue attendance on a case: where he finds another practitioner in attendance, Where other remedies than those prescribed by him are being used. Where his remedies are refused or prescribed diet not followed, where he is convinced that the illness is an imposture and he is being made a party to a false presence where the patient persists in the abuse of opium, alcohol, chloral or similar poisons. Where the patient does not scrupulously follow the instructions regarding diet, regimen, observation of his condition, etc.

He is not in any way bound to give up because he cannot cure it, so long as the patient desires his services. Every patient at the close of his treatment and on payment of a requisite fee for the guidance of his future medical attendance is entitled to know the list of remedies adminis-

tered to him but as a matter of etiquette, every subsequent physician should on his request be supplied the list of remedies tried on the patient by the previous physician on the termination of his services. It is a necessary corresponding corollary of the courtesy that the patient should inform the previous physician about his intentions to terminate his services.

It is the duty of a Homeopathic medical practitioner as a citizen to assist the public health authorities especially with regard to the notification of diseases so as to be able to enable the public health authorities to take preventivemeasures according to homeopathic principles as far as possible.

AIMS OF A HOMOEOPATHIC PHYSICIAN

- To restore the sick to health promptly, gently and permanently on definite principles as initiated in Organon of Medicine. To preserve health by removing the causes that excite and aggravate and maintain diseases.
- To remove all obstacles in the way of a permanent and lasting cure.
- To help the state authorities as a physician in the administration of justice when called as a witness on medical issues.
- To strive continually to improve his medical knowledge and skill and to make available to his patient and colleagues the benefits of his professional attainments.
- A Homoeopathic physician is expected to render that diligence and skill in his services as would be expected of another average Homoeopathic practitioner with similar qualifications, experiences and attainments. His acts of commission and

omission shall be judged not by any non-Homoeopathic standards of professional service to be rendered but by the standard of service expected of him as a homoeopath only.

HAHNEMANNIAN OATH

I Swear by Hahnemann, the great physician and all the God's and Goddesses making them my witness, that I will fulfill according to my ability and judgment this oath till the last minute of my life.

I shall consider myself as a physician appointed to practice according to the teachings of homoeopathy and to watch over the life and health of my fellow beings. May the love of my art actuate me at all times. I shall regard my teacher who has taught me this art equal to my parents.

I shall never see in the patient anything but a fellow being in pain and suffering. I shall consider him sick in body mind and spirit. I will treat him accordingly and will advice dietetic, hygienic and preventive measures for his benefit according to the best of my knowledge and judgment. I will always avoid any harm or injustice to my patient. I may be granted strength, time and opportunity to fulfill my ideal.

I will always administer drugs that are prepared according to the instructions laid down in Organon. I will never give any drug that can destroy life, even if asked for it, nor will I suggest it to anyone. Similarly, I will not give a woman an abortive drug. Neither thirst for fame, nor a passion for a great reputation will engage my mind and deceive me from my path.

I will always exert for the benefit of the sick, whatever patients come to me. I will be free from prejudices and remain away from all mischief and in particular from sexual relations

with male and female, either in bonds or free. I will never disclose any of the facts that I may hear during the course of treatment to anyone, on no account. In this way, no evil will be done by me to anyone during his life.

I will always have an open mind. I will correct what I have acquired, if necessary, and extend its domain. I will develop a spirit of indefinite limits to aquifer knowledge. I will cultivate the vision to discover my errors of yesterday, to appreciate what I have today and to get glimpses of the new light of tomorrow. If I fulfill this oath and do not violate it in any respect, I may be honored by my fellow beings eternally. If I digress and swear falsely, may the opposite of all this be my fate.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF HOMOEOPATHY

The first council of the Central Council of Homoeopathy was nominated by the Government of India in 1973, and its first President was Professor A.K. Kisku, who continued for one year and then resigned. Dr. Jugal Kishor was then selected by the majority

as the President. And Dr. Diwan Harish Chandra became the Vice president. The Functions of the Central Council of Homoeopathy are:

- Maintenance of Central Register wherein the names and addresses of practicing Homoeopaths are listed.
- Laying down minimum standards to be observed in Homoeopathic education.
- Recognizing Homoeopathic Medical Colleges and Hospitals.
- Recommending recognition or withdrawal of medical qualifications granted by Homoeopathic medical institutions in India to the Central Government.
- Negotiating with institutions located in other Countries imparting training in Homoeopathy for recognition of their qualifications on a reciprocal basis.
- Laying down standards of professional conduct, etiquette and a code of ethics to be observed by the practitioners of Homoeopathy.

[CLICK HERE](#)