

Agatsu Clinic's Ethics Code

The ethics code mentioned herein shall be applicable to the psychologists' activities/duties that are a part of their professional role as Psychologists as well as to HAP counsellors's activities/duties that are a part of their professional role as HAP Counsellors.

I. Self-determination and nobility of all persons:

1. Respects the privacy, rights and distinctiveness of each person and patient.
2. Takes an unyielding stand against all forms of harassment and abuse.
3. Shows utmost sensitivity and susceptibility towards the moral, social and religious beliefs and standards and sexual orientation of patients.
4. Firmly abstains from imposing their personal beliefs or practices on patients and others.
5. Maintains appropriate therapeutic boundaries at all times. Including but not limited to:
 - i) Never enters into dual relationships (i.e., social relationships, sexual relationships etc.) with current / past patients or someone with whom the patient has a significant relationship (e.g., child's parent, sibling, chosen family).
 - ii) Does not enter into a therapeutic relationship and/or accept a patient with whom the practitioner already has a personal relationship and where there is a viable chance of professional boundaries not being sustained.
6. Accepts responsibility for boundary crossings and violations when they occur and takes immediate steps to address and rectify a boundary violation when it transpires.

II. Eminence in Professional Practice:

1. The counsellor solely aims to work towards the welfare of their patients and take all the requisite and precautionary modus operandi to avoid causing any form of distress to the patients.
2. The counsellor will never fail to assume their personal responsibility for their own emotional, mental, and physical health. This includes regular supervision, undergoing their own therapy as well as their own consistent personal practice of self-inquiry, self-reflection and self-care.
3. The counsellor will superintend their own expertise, training, health and well-being which will unequivocally enable them to be their most honest, truthful and accurate self.

4. The counsellor will provide services in areas which are well- within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, consultation, study, or professional experience.
5. The counsellor shall be punctual and well-prepared for all sessions with their respective patients.
6. The counsellor shall keep up to date records of sessions, and session notes. They will be according to the Agatsu SOP on patient documentation. All information will be backed up on a password protected hard-drive. Each counsellor will have access only to their patient notes.
7. The counsellor will not endorse any service or product for their own personal gain or an ulterior motive.

III. Integrity:

1. The counsellor will honestly inform their patients regarding possible courses of action, limitations of professional services, fees, availability, scope of practice and potential risks and benefits, enabling the patient to make an informed decision about participation in the proposed course of therapy.
2. The counsellor will not eschew consulting their peers and/or mentors on any ethical dilemmas that they face while treating a patient; while maintaining confidentiality. Should a patient coming to Agatsu be known to anyone at the foundation the case will not be discussed in group servision, only during individual supervision.
3. The counsellor during all times shall ensure to respect each patient's right to make their own lawful decisions.
4. The counsellor will only audio record the session with the consent of the patient, which may be used only for supervision purposes. The session recording will not be shared for any reason barring supervision, and will be kept with the counsellor.

IV. Confidentiality & Anonymity

1. The counsellor will maintain strict confidentiality with the patient unless it is inconsistent with the safety of the patient, the counsellor or a third person; or against any legal action (i.e., criminal or civil court cases where a court order is made demanding disclosure) and/or legal requirement.
2. Patient notes will be kept confidential. For any documentation purposes patient ID's will be used in correspondence.

IV. Miscellaneous

1. All therapy sessions to be conducted in the premises of Agatsu's clinic. No therapy sessions shall be conducted online or anywhere else.
2. The counsellor will not conduct any psychometric assessment with the patient apart from the PHQ-9, which is necessitated by the HAP treatment protocol. All scores will be disseminated to the patients should they ask.
3. The counsellor reserves the right to decline treating a patient.
4. The counsellor reserves the right to discontinue treating a patient while maintaining the afore-mentioned fundamental principles.
5. All communication between the counsellor and patients will be through the official communication channel i.e., office phone and official email. The counsellor will have no personal communication with their patients and this includes social media communication as well.
6. Receiving or sending of gifts (which may or may not have a monetary value) between the counsellor and patient is not acceptable.