



**INSTITUTE FOR DIETETICS
IN NIGERIA (IDN)**

CODE OF ETHICS

FOR

**MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE FOR
DIETETICS IN NIGERIA**

***A PUBLICATION OF THE INSTITUTE FOR
DIETETICS IN NIGERIA (IDN), 2024.***

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PREFACE

The Institute for dietetics in Nigeria (IDN) is the national professional body of Dietitians in Nigeria. The Institute was established in 1970 as Nigerian Dietetics Association (NDA) and it existed as such until 2010 when the association was registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) as Institute for Dietetics in Nigeria (IDN).

Since the inception of the professional association of dietitians, there has been three editions of code of ethics for the observance of members at various times. However, none of the versions that existed before now was published into a document as a regulation.

This edition is the published version of Code of Ethics for members of the Institute. The publication is in tandem with international practice that encourages appropriate codification of code of ethics by national professional dietetics bodies for her members.

The publication is out to challenge all members, registered dietitians and registered dietetic technicians to uphold ethical principles. The Code of Ethics is therefore applicable to all members of the Institute for Dietetics in

Nigeria who are registered Dietitians or registered Dietetic Technicians.

When providing services, the nutrition and dietetics practitioner adheres to the core values of customer focus, integrity, innovation, social responsibility, and diversity. Science-based decisions, derived from the best available research and evidence, are the underpinnings of ethical conduct and practice.

This Code applies to nutrition and dietetics practitioners who act in a wide variety of capacities, provides general principles and specific ethical standards for situations frequently encountered in daily practice. The primary goal is the protection of the individuals, groups, organizations, communities, or populations with whom the practitioner works and interacts.

By accepting membership in the Institute, all Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners agree to abide by the Code.

Tajudeen Olutope Ahmed, Esq;FIDN,
National President, IDN
21st June, 2024

IDN CODE OF ETHICS FOR DIETITIANS

1. GENERAL AVOUCHMENT

Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Conduct himself/herself with honesty, integrity and fairness.
- b. Practices dietetics based on scientific principles and current information.
- c. Presents substantiated information and interprets controversial information without personal bias, recognizing that legitimate differences of opinion exist.
- d. Assumes responsibility and accountability for personal competence in practice, continually to increase knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice.
- e. Recognizes and exercises professional judgment within the limits of his/her qualifications and collaborates with others, seeks counsel, or makes referrals as appropriate.
- f. Provides sufficient information to enable clients and others to make their own informed decisions.
- g. Protects confidential information and makes full disclosure about any limitations on his/her ability to guarantee full confidentiality.
- h. Provides professional services with objectivity and with respect for the unique needs and values of individuals.

- i. Provides professional services in a manner that is sensitive to cultural differences and does not discriminate against others on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, religion, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.
- j. Does not engage in sexual harassment in connection with professional practice.
- k. Provides objective evaluations of performance for employees and coworkers, candidates for employment, students, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships. The dietetics practitioner makes all reasonable effort to avoid bias in any kind of professional evaluation of others.
- l. Be alert to situations that might cause a conflict of interest or have the appearance of a conflict. The dietetics practitioner provides full disclosure when a real or potential conflict of interest arises.
- m. Inform the public and colleagues of his/her services with factual information. The dietetics practitioner does not advertise in a false or misleading manner.
- n. Promotes or endorses products in a manner that is neither false nor misleading.
- o. Permits the use of his/her name for the purpose of certifying that dietetics services have been rendered only if he/she has provided or supervised the provision of those services.
- p. Accurately presents professional qualifications and credentials.

- q. Supports and promotes high standards of professional practice and accepts the obligation to protect clients, the public and the profession by upholding the Code of Ethics for the profession of Dietetics.

2. COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE (NON – MALEFICENCE)

Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Practice using an evidence-based approach within areas of competence, continuously develop and enhance expertise, and recognize limitations.
- b. Demonstrate in-depth scientific knowledge of food, human nutrition and behavior.
- c. Assess the validity and applicability of scientific evidence without personal bias.
- d. Interpret, apply, participate in and/or generate research to enhance practice, innovation, and discovery.
- e. Make evidence-based practice decisions, taking into account the unique values and circumstances of the patient/client and community, in combination with the practitioner's expertise and judgment.
- f. Recognize and exercise professional judgment within the limits of individual qualifications and collaborate with others, seek counsel, and make referrals as appropriate.

- g. Act in a caring and respectful manner, mindful of individual differences, cultural, and ethnic diversity.
- h. Practice within the limits of their scope and collaborate with the inter-professional team.

3. INTEGRITY IN PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS AND PRACTICES (AUTONOMY)

Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Disclose any conflicts of interest, including any financial interests in products or services that are recommended. Refrain from accepting gifts or services which potentially influence or which may give the appearance of influencing professional judgment.
- b. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including obtaining/maintaining practicing license or certification.
- c. Maintain and appropriately use credentials.
- d. Respect intellectual property rights, including citation and recognition of the ideas and work of others, regardless of the medium (e.g. written, oral, electronic).
- e. Provide accurate and truthful information in all communications.
- f. Report inappropriate behavior or treatment of a patient/ client by another nutrition and dietetics practitioner or other professionals.

- g. Document, code and bill to most accurately reflect the character and extent of delivered services.
- h. Respect patient/client's autonomy. Safeguard patient/client confidentiality according to current regulations and laws.
- i. Implement appropriate measures to protect personal health information using appropriate techniques (e.g., encryption).

4. PROFESSIONALISM (BENEFICENCE)

Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the well-being of patients/clients.
- b. Respect the values, rights, knowledge, and skills of colleagues and other professionals.
- c. Demonstrate respect, constructive dialogue, civility and professionalism in all communications, including social media.
- d. Refrain from communicating false, fraudulent, deceptive, misleading, disparaging or unfair statements or claims.
- e. Uphold professional boundaries and refrain from romantic relationships with any patients/clients, surrogates, supervisees, or students.
- f. Refrain from verbal/physical/emotional/sexual harassment.
- g. Provide objective evaluations of performance for employees, coworkers, and students and

candidates for employment, professional association memberships, awards, or scholarships, making all reasonable efforts to avoid bias in the professional evaluation of others.

- h. Communicate at an appropriate level to promote health literacy.
- i. Contribute to the advancement and competence of others, including colleagues, students and the public.

5. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, GLOBAL NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING (JUSTICE)

Nutrition and Dietetics practitioners shall:

- a. Collaborate with others to reduce health disparities and protect human rights.
- b. Promote fairness and objectivity with fair and equitable treatment.
- c. Contribute time and expertise to activities that promote respect, integrity, and competence of the profession.
- d. Promote the unique role of nutrition and dietetics practitioners.
- e. Engage in service that benefits the community and to enhance the public's trust in the profession.
- f. Seek leadership opportunities in professional, community, and service organizations to enhance health and nutritional status while protecting the public.

INTERNATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS AND CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Approved by the Members of the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations September 7, 2008 and amended November 13, 2010 by the Board of Directors to incorporate an expanded standard "Adopting an evidence-based approach to dietetic practice".

International standards are not meant to replace any national standards that exist, but are meant to put on paper those important matters to which we can all agree. They represent the common ground of dietetics around the world.

International Code of Ethics

Dietitians practice in a just and equitable manner to improve the nutrition of the world by:

- Being competent, objective and honest in our actions
- Respecting all people and their needs
- Collaborating with others
- Striving for positive nutrition outcomes for people
- Doing no harm
- Adhering to the standards of good practice in nutrition and dietetics

International Code of Good Practice

Provision of Service and application of knowledge:

- Provide high quality, cost efficient services in nutrition and dietetics
- Provide services based on the expectation and

- needs of the community or client
- Competently apply the knowledge of nutrition and dietetics and integrate this knowledge with other disciplines in health and social sciences
 - Work co-operatively with others to integrate nutrition and dietetics into overall care/service regardless of context
 - Work in partnership with clients and users of the service

Developing Practice and Application of Research

- Interpret, apply, participate in or generate research to enhance practice
- Develop a unique body of knowledge
- Have an in-depth scientific knowledge of food and human nutrition

Adopting an evidence-based approach to dietetic practice

- Ask questions, systematically find research evidence, and assess the validity, applicability and importance of that evidence
- Combine the evidence with the dietitian's expertise and judgment and the client's or community's unique values and circumstances to guide decision-making in dietetics
- Apply an evidence-based approach to all areas of dietetic practice to improve health outcomes in individual clients, communities and populations

- State the source of evidence underpinning practice recommendations and integrate knowledge of other disciplines
- Reflect on how a dietitian's own perspectives or biases may influence the interpretation of evidence

Communication

- Communicate effectively through nutrition education, education and training, development of policy and programs
- Advocate for nutrition and dietetics, the alleviation of hunger and the value of services
- Advance and promote the dietetics profession

Quality in practice

- Systematically evaluate the quality of practice and revise practice on the basis of this feedback
- Strive to improve services and practice at all times
- Maintain continued competence to practice

Continued competence and professional accountability

- Ensure accountability to the public
- Accept responsibility for ensuring practice meets legislative requirements

Maintain continued competence by being responsible for lifelong learning and engaging in self-development

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