

ISAPS Ethical Code

Contents

Ethical Core principles for ISAPS members:.....	1
I. Definitions, application and terms of reference.....	2
II. General principles	2
III. Consent, Patient Safety and other Ethical aspects.....	3
III.2. Patient Safety	3
III.3. Other ethical aspects	3
IV. Privacy and professional secret	4
V. Doctor – Patient relation.....	4
VI. Relations between members and with other colleagues	4
VII. Publicity	5
DOCUMENT STATUS	6

Ethical Core principles for ISAPS members:

1. To use his/her skill and knowledge to deliver effective treatments to all patients without discrimination for race, sex, religion, beliefs, or origin, with the objective to enhance their quality of life.
2. To foster mutual trust between patient and doctor through honesty in all communication.
3. To provide truthful information on possible treatments and available alternatives, including risks and possible adverse events.
4. To protect patient data and to keep professional confidentiality on all patient information provided to him/her or revealed during the professional relation, including toward peers.
5. To use all means to protect, preserve and re-establish patient health. To always put patient safety first and to adhere to current norms of hygiene and prophylaxis. To abstain from offering treatments that are not scientifically proven, or treatments the member is not sufficiently trained to deliver safely.
6. To respect the other members and to foster good professional relations with all colleagues. To abstain from interfering with treatments in progress delivered by other members. To respect and recognize intellectual property published by other members or shared in scientific meetings, to provide help and information if consulted by another member.
7. To use social media and all means of communication with the patient in a way that it transports truthful and correct information. To abstain from communications that disrespect the dignity of the medical profession or that have a purely commercial content.

To avoid fostering false expectations and to abstain from creating the impression of being in need for any aesthetic treatment.

8. To offer the correct and proven treatment for a given indication and to openly communicate fees and other associated costs to the patient.
9. To fully respect all applicable laws and regulations and adhere to the Bylaws of ISAPS.
10. Compliance with the Ethical Codex will be required for continued membership in ISAPS. The Board of Directors (BoD) and the Ethics Committee are committed to enforce this principle in the interest of the society if deemed necessary.

I. Definitions, application and terms of reference

1. Ethical Code: Collective description of ethical norms and principles regarding the professional and social conduct that ISAPS, represented through its BoD, requires each member to adhere to and to comply with.
2. The Ethics Committee (EthCo) is responsible for the development and continuous adaptation of the ethical code.
3. The Ethics Committee has the delegated authority of the BoD as defined in its actual Terms of Reference (ToRs), to examine conducts that are brought to its attention by members or the board and to suggest disciplinary action if found be in conflict with the ethical code.

II. General principles

ISAPS's Ethical Code is a collective description of ethical norms and principles that should guide and inspire the professional and social conduct of each member. It has been developed to reflect core principles of the ethical code of the WHO, while adapting it to the special needs and added responsibilities of a society that represents members offering not only curative treatments of pathologies, but furthermore elective, aesthetic procedures to enhance the quality of life of healthy patients.

1. The objective of aesthetic and plastic surgery is to enhance life quality through the modification or elimination of congenital or acquired physical aspects that are perceived as disturbing by the patient, to diminish dissatisfaction caused by the physiologic ageing process and to enhance physical and psychological well-being.
2. Our members shall offer their patients efficient and safe treatments; therefore, it is their obligation and responsibility to be sufficiently trained and to update their knowledge through continuous education.
3. The member shall use his skill and knowledge to deliver effective treatments to all patients without discrimination for race, sex, religion, beliefs, or origin.
4. The member shall abstain from performing a treatment if he considers it unsafe, unethical or unworthy of the medical profession, even if there is a medical indication.
5. The member shall make all his decisions on treatments on his own conscience and independently from trends and tendencies or workplace bias, or for financial benefit only.

III. Consent, Patient Safety and other Ethical aspects

III.1. Informed Consent and documentation

1. The patient shall be given clear information on treatment, alternatives and risks.
2. The member shall advise the patient on the elective nature of the procedure.
3. The patient shall sign a consent to treatment .
4. The member shall produce medical records clearly understandable by other experts in the field and guarantee their safe-keeping.
5. The member shall keep medical records with restricted access and separated from administrative records according to applicable laws (GDPR, HIPAA etc)

III.2. Patient Safety

1. The member shall dispose of all means to protect, preserve and re-establish patient health.
2. The member shall always put patient safety first and to adhere to current norms of hygiene and prophylaxis.
3. The member shall abstain from offering treatments that are not scientifically proven, or treatments the member is not sufficiently trained to deliver safely.
4. The patient shall be informed if a treatment is considered off-label or purely symptomatic.

III.3. Other ethical aspects

1. The member shall choose the best treatment based on the indication and efficiency not based on economic criteria, workplace pressure, peer pressure or trends.
2. The member shall not propose new treatments or studies to patients without prior approval by the corresponding ethical committee.
3. The member shall expressively inform the patient on the nature of all off-label or experimental treatments.
4. The member shall disclose his conflicts of interest whenever presenting treatment data to peers and shall publish study results deemed negative for a certain device or product.
5. The member shall obtain patient consent for publication of patient data, especially for non-anonymized pictures and adhere to rigid scientific criteria avoiding to best knowledge error or false interpretation of data.

IV. Privacy and professional secret

1. The member shall always respect the professional secret inherent to the profession.
2. The member shall inform and educate collaborators and staff on their shared obligation to maintain patient privacy and professional secret and facilitate all means to staff to comply with this obligation.
3. In exceptional cases, legal requirements, disciplinary processes, or the need of protection of the public may allow or require the breach of the professional secret, here the member shall act with utmost discretion and within strict limits.
4. The member shall not share any specific details on confident information received from a patient that allows others to identify the patient.
5. The member shall never use confidential and privileged information on a patient to his own financial advantage.

V. Doctor – Patient relation

1. The member shall respect all patients and their beliefs without discrimination for race, sex, religion, beliefs, or origin
2. The member shall adapt his verbal and non-verbal communication to the social, cultural and educational level of the patient.
3. The member shall avoid unnecessary exams and explorations.
4. The member shall inform the patient always with enough time in advance on individual risks and benefits before performing a treatment so the patient can come to a reflected decision and consent.
5. The member shall respect the wish of a patient for a second opinion, without disrespecting this opinion or the consulted colleague.
6. The member shall foster mutual trust with patients.
7. The member shall abstain from being treating physician and expert witness for the same patient in case of conflict with a colleague.

VI. Relations between members and with other colleagues

1. The member shall respect different opinions of other members and colleagues regarding treatment or diagnosis.
2. The member shall resolve professional disputes with other members within ISAPS via the ethical committee.
3. The member shall avoid provoking disrespect of another member through communication in public media.
4. The member shall not interfere with the treatment of another member, except in case of emergency or if he consulted by the other member.
5. No member shall copy or reappropriate intellectual property of another member or another colleague (including scientific publications) without prior consent of the author.

6. The member shall avoid any comment about another member or colleague that could question their professional conduct or personal honour, and abstain from spreading rumours or criticisms.
7. ISAPS members shall abstain from offering training to non-specialist physicians.

VII. Publicity

1. The member shall ensure that his publicity is truthful and does not create false expectations and that it is not a purely commercial content.
2. The member shall abstain from communications that disrespect the dignity of the medical profession.
3. The member shall abstain from creating the impression for the patient of being in need for any aesthetic treatment.
4. The member shall ensure that the use of social media and all means of communication with the patients comply with national and local rules, with the ethical code of their local medical board and with the ethical code of ISAPS.
5. The member shall refrain from publicity that uses pricing lower than usual as dominating element.
6. The member shall refrain from campaigns that push patients to have their treatment during a certain window of time or offer great discounts if they bundle multiple treatments.
7. The member shall avoid all publicity that trivialize the risks of medical treatments.
8. The member shall avoid all publicity that ridicules the specialty or disrespects the medical profession.
9. The member shall abstain from all publicity declaring himself as better than other members or colleagues.
10. The member shall avoid all publicity that fosters false expectations or false need.
11. The member shall ensure that website content and social media sites comply with the more rigorous and strict criteria that are expected in the communication with patients and in the transfer of medical knowledge.
12. The member may use all means of publicity to inform about his practice, his training and his specialist knowledge while respecting this ethical code.
13. The member shall abstain from offering his services in the form of prizes, gifts, raffles, contests, or any other form that can trivialize the seriousness of a medical treatment.
14. The member shall abstain from publicity that promises certain outcomes or results, declares to be safe or denies the possibility of adverse events.

Version Control

This Ethical code was agreed by the ISAPS Board of Directors in 2023. It replaces the previous Code of Ethics, which had been agreed in 2016 and incorporated into the version of the ISAPS bylaws published in 2020.