



APPENDIX I

CANADIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS – PREAMBLE

PURPOSE

This Code of Ethics is a set of principles of professional conduct to which dentists must aspire to fulfill their duties to their patients, to the public, to the profession, and to their colleagues. This Code affirms or clarifies principles that are definitive of professional and ethical dental care. For those about to enter the profession, this Code identifies the basic moral commitments of dentistry and will serve as a source for education and reflection. For those within the profession, this Code provides direction for ethical practice; in so doing, it also serves as a basis for self-evaluation. For those outside the profession, this Code provides public identification of the profession's ethical expectations of its members. Therefore, this Code of Ethics is educational, guides behavior and expresses to the larger community the values and ideals that we espouse by reason of trust and commitment.

PRINCIPLES

This Code is the national guideline of, and expresses the values shared by, the dental profession across Canada. In each province, the licensing bodies have adopted comparable or similar Codes of Ethics to guide and set standards for their jurisdictions.

A dentist's foremost responsibility is to the patient. Dentistry is a profession, in part, because the decisions of its members involve moral choices. Every dental practitioner makes decisions that involve choices between conflicting values while providing care for patients. These values should be carefully considered by a dentist and decisions regarding them should be made prior to providing treatment. Among these are the particular values to which the dental profession is especially committed. These are listed here in the order of priority beginning with the most important and include:

Life and Health:	The primary concerns is the life and general health of the patient.
Appropriate and Pain Free Oral Function:	The specific nature of dental health for each individual patient depends on variables including the patient's age, general health, underlying anatomy, and compliance with oral hygiene.
Patient Autonomy:	The patient has the right to choose, on the basis of adequate information, from alternate treatment plans that meet professional standards of care. The treatment plan chosen by the patient may or may not be that which the dentist would prefer.
Practice Preferences:	Dentists vary in the range of services performed and the method of delivery of those services. A dentist's individual preference in the



delivery of dental care plays an important role in treatment recommendations and decisions. This preference should be acknowledged by the patient.

Aesthetic Values:

Oral and facial appearance is important to the self-image of the patient and an important consideration of dental practice.

Cost:

Dentistry often offers treatment choices with a range of costs. Appropriate treatment alternatives are to be presented each with its associated costs and benefits.

Under certain circumstances, a lower ranked value may justifiably be chosen over the next higher. These circumstances will depend upon the clinical situation that may arise. Other external factors may be present but rarely be of such ethical significance as to outweigh the prioritized values, particularly the higher values.

SUMMARY

This Code is intended to guide a dynamic process of interaction between a dentist and patient, and the dental profession and the larger community. It reflects not only current thought on issues but is also an ethical framework that is responsive to changing needs and values. While change is inevitable - certain truths will always remain for us to identify in our response to the human condition. To emphasize, the dentist's primary responsibility is to the patient. In fulfilling this responsibility, the dentist shall uphold the honor and the dignity of the profession and shall adhere to professional codes and obligations as well as the required applicable legislation.