



STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CODE OF ETHICS OF THE AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND ARTS THERAPY ASSOCIATION INC.

Preamble

Arts Therapists are committed to the absolute welfare of their clients and to the preservation of their human rights and privileges. This document is based upon that commitment. The following ethical principles serve as a guideline for the professional conduct of Arts Therapists, to ensure integrity and a high standard of Arts Therapy practice. This code affirms the ardent pursuit of professionally responsible actions and the appraisal of ethical issues and their implications, so that Arts Therapists provide services that are ethically sound and therefore in the best interest of our clients.

ANZATA recognises the ability of all art forms to enrich and enhance our lives. The mission of ANZATA is to lead the profession of arts therapy in Australia and New Zealand. The Association attends to ethical standards of professional regulation and registration.

ANZATA represents all art psychotherapies and has a category of professional membership for individuals who have completed an equivalent Masters degree in an art modality which complies with the training standards of ANZATA.

Principle I: Professional Responsibility (General)

1. Arts Therapists are expected to support and further the goals of the profession by acting with integrity in maintaining the highest standards of Arts Therapy practice.
2. Arts Therapists shall seek to be informed about the meaning and implications of the Treaty of Waitangi in their work. They shall understand principles of protection, participation and partnership and with Maori people. In Australia arts therapists recognise the unique position of Aboriginal people in Australian culture and history. Art therapists recognise that Aboriginal people are the original Custodians of the Land.
3. Arts Therapists recognise and respect cultural differences **and** diversity among people, and oppose discrimination and oppressive behaviour.
4. Arts Therapists will abide by the ethical standards of their professional association in all work settings, whether employed by government/ non-government agencies or self employed.
5. Arts Therapists abide by the laws of the society in which they practice.
6. Arts Therapists will only provide assessment, treatment and professional advice for which they are formally qualified, as recognised by their professional registration/s.

7. Arts Therapists will present themselves as Arts Therapy professionals, and will never misrepresent their credentials in education, experience, affiliations or advertising.
8. Arts Therapists shall not exploit their clients financially. They are required to be honest, straightforward and accountable in all financial matters and to keep accurate records concerning their clients and other professionals.
9. Arts Therapists are responsible for setting and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. This includes avoiding any situations that compromise a sense of objectivity, and/or presents a conflict of interests. They must not engage in dual relationships (e.g. personal or business relationships with clients).
10. Arts Therapists are prohibited from exploiting clients, past or present, in a financial, sexual, emotional or any other way.
11. Arts Therapists contribute to promoting Arts Therapy to the professional community of related health workers and to the general public, acting to expand Arts Therapy opportunities for all appropriate client populations.
12. When an Arts Therapist offers arts therapy workshops, presentations, growth groups etc. They must make it clear to participants whether the activity is therapy or education. They must ensure the well being of the participants by providing therapeutic assistance if needed during or following the Art therapy experience.
13. When it is apparent that the Arts Therapist is unable to be of professional help to a client, the Arts Therapist should not start treatment or should terminate treatment if it has already begun, while offering help in seeking satisfactory alternative services for the client.
14. Arts Therapists end treatment in a responsible manner when, the therapist and client agree that the client has gained as much as possible, and /or that the treatment goals have been achieved and that termination of Arts Therapy is a logical extension of the therapeutic process.
15. Arts Therapists must guard against fostering a dependent relationship with clients and are clear at the outset about therapeutic aims and the duration of the therapy.
16. It is an expectation that Arts Therapists have regular supervision and use such supervision to develop arts therapy skills, monitor performance and provide accountability for practice. Where possible, supervision should be from an experienced registered Arts Therapist.
17. Arts Therapists will seek counsel from their supervisors, colleagues, and experts in a particular therapeutic area, to serve the best interests of their clients.
18. Arts Therapists are obligated to maintain continuing professional education, which includes seminars/ conferences/ reading/teaching etc. To continue to relate to all aspects of being an Arts Therapist including the need to maintain a personal art making practice.

Principle II: Confidentiality

Arts Therapists have a primary responsibility to respect and honour client confidentiality and to safeguard all written, taped and visual information gained during the course of therapy.

1. In both individual and group therapy, and prior to the commencement of Arts Therapy, Arts Therapists are obliged to inform clients of their right to confidentiality.
2. All information obtained during the course of treatment, be it verbal, written, taped or visual is shared only with the Arts Therapist's supervisor and where necessary, with the appropriate professionals concerned with the client's case.
3. Arts Therapists must obtain each and every clients' written permission before any verbal, written, taped or visual information is shared, outside of that mentioned in Point 2. When permission has been given by the client, the Art therapist must remove all identifying information, ensure that content revealed is accurate and unbiased and directly relates to the client's therapeutic relationship with the therapist.
4. The Arts Therapist takes the necessary precautions to protect the confidences of clients who are minors, or other clients who are unable to give voluntary informed consent, due to impairments which limit comprehension or communication.
5. Arts Therapists may breach confidentiality without client consent when mandated by law, or when the client's mental and emotional state clearly indicates an immediate danger to the client and/or others. In such cases, the Art therapist must act in accordance with the law, while at all times respecting the client's dignity.
6. Arts Therapists must keep adequate records (notes, artwork/photos) for a minimum of 7 years. The keeping of ANZATA records is to be for 7 years. All client material, whether written, art, audio or other, must be kept in a secure location until disposed of appropriately, ensuring ongoing confidentiality at every stage of the process.
7. Arts Therapists should inform the Association of persons using the title of Arts Therapist, who are either unqualified and/or unregistered as Arts Therapists, so that a formal complaint can be made by the Association.

Principle III: Responsibility to Arts Therapy Colleagues

Arts Therapists are respectful in their regard for colleagues, both within and outside the Arts Therapy profession.

1. Arts Therapists cooperate with and support other Arts Therapy colleagues. They are committed to the development of Arts Therapy Practice and issues which arise for Arts Therapists as a professional group.
2. When deemed appropriate: Arts Therapists will refer clients to other therapeutic services, which may better suit the client's needs.
3. Arts Therapists do not offer professional services to individuals receiving Arts Therapy from another Arts Therapist.
4. In conducting research, Arts Therapists officially acknowledge all colleagues/administrators and other professionals who have contributed to their research efforts. Before embarking on research in an agency, organisation or institution, Arts Therapists provide adequate information about the research and obtain formal permission from the appropriate authorities.
5. If an Arts Therapist becomes aware of an ethical violation by an Arts Therapy colleague, an attempt to informally resolve the issue should be considered first. The ANZATA Ethics and Standards of Practice Sub-Committee should be notified if:
 - a) An Arts Therapist does not wish to make an informal approach him/herself
or
 - b) The ethical violation cannot be resolved informally
or
 - b) The ethical violation is of a serious nature.
6. If there is a formal complaint made to ANZATA regarding the professional practice of an Arts Therapist, the formal complaint will be presented to The Ethics and Standards Sub Committee of ANZATA. This sub committee will follow the 'Procedures Regarding The Ethical Standards for Arts Therapists' document. Arts Therapists found to be in serious violation of the Code of Ethics may be subject to expulsion from the association.