

Code of Ethics

Adopted by the Society for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers Professional Code of Conduct for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers:

Preamble

The goal of this code of ethics is to promote excellence in patient care by fostering responsibility and accountability among diagnostic medical sonographers. In so doing, the integrity of the profession of diagnostic medical sonography will be maintained.

Objectives

1. To create and encourage an environment where professional and ethical issues are discussed and addressed.
2. To help the individual diagnostic medical sonographers identify ethical issues.
3. To provide guidelines for individual diagnostic medical sonographers regarding ethical behavior.

Principles

Principle I: In order to promote patient well-being, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:

- A. Provide information to the patient about the purpose of the sonography procedure and respond to the patient's questions and concerns.
- B. Respect the patient's autonomy and the right to refuse the procedure.
- C. Recognize the patient's individuality and provide care in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner.
- D. Promote the privacy, dignity and comfort of the patient by thoroughly explaining the examination, patient positioning and implementing proper draping techniques.
- E. Maintain confidentiality of acquired patient information, and follow national patient privacy regulations as required by the "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)."

F. Promote patient safety during the provision of sonography procedures and while the patient is in the care of the diagnostic medical sonographer.

Principle II: To promote the highest level of competent practice, diagnostic medical sonographers shall:

- A. Obtain appropriate diagnostic medical sonography education and clinical skills to ensure competence.
- B. Achieve and maintain specialty specific sonography credentials. Sonography credentials must be awarded by a national sonography credentialing body that is accredited by a national organization which accredits credentialing bodies, i.e., the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA); <http://www.noca.org/ncca/ncca.htm> or the International Organization for Standardization (ISO); <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/ISOOnline.frontpage>.
- C. Uphold professional standards by adhering to defined technical protocols and diagnostic criteria established by peer review.
- D. Acknowledge personal and legal limits, practice within the defined scope of practice, and assume responsibility for his/her actions.
- E. Maintain continued competence through lifelong learning, which includes continuing education, acquisition of specialty specific credentials and re-credentialing.
- F. Perform medically indicated ultrasound studies, ordered by a licensed physician or their designated health care provider.
- G. Protect patients and/or study subjects by adhering to oversight and approval of investigational procedures, including documented informed consent.

H. Refrain from the use of any substances that may alter judgment or skill and thereby compromise patient care.

I. Be accountable and participate in regular assessment and review of equipment, procedures, protocols, and results. This can be accomplished through facility accreditation.

Principle III: To promote professional integrity and public trust, the diagnostic medical sonographer shall:

A. Be truthful and promote appropriate communications with patients and colleagues.

B. Respect the rights of patients, colleagues and yourself.

C. Avoid conflicts of interest and situations that exploit others or misrepresent information.

D. Accurately represent his/her experience, education and credentialing.