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**GUIDELINES
ON
ETHICAL CONDUCT
FOR MEDICAL & DENTAL PRACTITIONERS
REGISTERED WITH
THE SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL**

SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL
31, NORRIS CANAL ROAD
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SRI LANKA MEDICAL COUNCIL

"Medicine is a sacred calling and he who makes it ridiculous is guilty of sacrilege"
– Sodhoff

This is a revised edition of the Guidelines on Ethical Conduct for Medical and Dental Practitioners published in 2003. There are a few changes in the format and there is a Page of Contents.

The publication on serious professional misconduct and guidelines in writing medical certificates are printed separately so that practitioners can have easy access to each of these booklets making reading each one easier.

All these publications have been prepared by the Ethics Committee of the SLMC.

The Hippocratic Oath is included here together with the oath taken prior to the full registration with the Sri Lanka Medical Council. The latter has been adapted from the Geneva Declaration of 1948 of the World Medical Association and has been amended in 1968 and again in 1983 in Vienna. It is the modern version of the Hippocratic Oath.

The Hippocratic Oath is an ethical code attributed to the ancient Greek Physician Hippocrates (460-370 B.C). It is adopted as a guide to conduct by the medical profession throughout the ages and is still used in the graduation ceremonies of many medical schools.

The text of the oath itself is divided into two major sections. The first sets out the obligations of the physician to students of medicine and the duties of the pupil to the teacher. In the second section the physician pledges to prescribe only beneficial treatments according to his abilities and judgement, to refrain from causing harm and to live an exemplary personal and professional life.

It is an oath to uphold a high ethical standard in practice and an indenture in which the candidate agrees to share his livelihood with his teacher and teach students like his own children.

The poem "If" was written by a professor of medicine of a bygone era. At his feet we learnt excellent bed-side clinical medicine during a time when sophisticated laboratory and radiological investigations were scarce and present day scans were non-existent. He inspired many generations of doctors to show concern and compassion to patients irrespective of their social status.

The article on Doctor-Doctor and Doctor-Patient relationship is included here and needs careful consideration.

The chapter on good medical practice is adapted from the publication of the General Medical Council.

Readers must take note of the Disciplinary Procedures.

It is essential that doctors have a nurse or chaperone especially when examining patients of the opposite sex. Following this simple principle will avoid embarrassment to both the doctor and the patient.

Written consent is required prior to surgical procedures and when examining persons for alleged assault or rape.

Blowing your own trumpet would certainly be a way of advertising your wares. The medical profession discourages such advertising. The article on Advertising by Doctors and Institutions was prepared by the Ethics Committee of the Sri Lanka Medical Association and some additions were made by our own committee.

The guideline for writing prescriptions must be adhered to.

The medical profession is often blamed for its association with the pharmaceutical industry. Guidelines with regard to this and Ethics