PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS

These principles are intended to aid psychoanalysts individually and collectively in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct. They are not laws, but standards by which a psychoanalyst, or a psychoanalyst in training (also referred to as a candidate) under the auspices of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society determine the propriety of his conduct in his relationship with patients, with colleagues, with students, with members of allied professions and with the public.

For the purpose of these Principles, a psychoanalyst (sometimes referred to as “analyst”) is a member of the Canadian Psychoanalytic Society.

SECTION I

Objectives of the Profession and the Individual Psychoanalyst

A psychoanalyst shall maintain the standards of practice as set out by the profession.

As a method of investigation of psychic processes, and as a therapeutic method, psychoanalysis has its own specific and particular ethical considerations.

A psychoanalyst shall refrain from any conduct or acts relevant to the practice of psychoanalysis that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

SECTION II

Ethical Conduct in the Practice of Psychoanalysis

A) Selection.

The selection of psychoanalysis as a method of treatment is determined on the basis of clinical assessment and psychodynamic formulations.

When recommending psychoanalysis, the psychoanalyst takes into consideration and discusses with the analysand a number of factors specific to

The male gender is used throughout this document for reasons of style only.
the psychoanalytic process, in establishing its setting and its working modalities. These modalities include those contractual arrangements (schedule, modes of payment, frequency of sessions, absence, etc.), necessary to the maintenance of psychoanalytic work.

Adequate notice and opportunity for discussion and exploration must be provided for in the event of any changes to the contractual framework originally agreed upon.

B) **Consultation.**

The psychoanalyst and/or analysand have the right to recommend or seek consultation from another psychoanalyst or other consultant whenever he or they believe that such consultation may benefit the treatment.

C) **Protection of Confidentiality.**

A psychoanalyst shall respect the confidentiality of his patients information and documents.

When a psychoanalyst uses case material in exchanges with colleagues for scientific, educational or consultative purposes, he should make every reasonable effort to ensure that the identity of the analysand is protected.

D) **Payment for Services.**

When applicable and in accordance with rules governing third party payment, when undertaking the treatment of an analysand, the psychoanalyst and the analysand will agree on the fee and the conditions of payment. Financial agreements between psychoanalysts and analysands must be voluntary, based on full and clear disclosure, and devoid of any coercion, by the psychoanalyst.

E) **The Psychoanalyst in Other Roles.**

If a psychoanalyst deals with patients in another professional capacity (for instance, as a general psychiatrist, social worker, or psychologist), he will also be bound by the rules of that profession.

F) **Sexual Misconduct in Relation to Analysands.**

A psychoanalyst shall not engage in sexual relationships or other forms of sexually intimate behaviour with the analysand.
G) **Relationships with Analysands/Patients of Colleagues.**

In providing consultation to analysands/patients of colleagues, the consultants should ascertain whether the person seeking the consultation has informed the treating analyst. The consultant should determine that this is in the best interest of the analysand prior to making his recommendation.

H) **Relationships in Psychoanalytic Training and Education**

Rules of conduct contained in these principles of ethics apply equally to the Training Analyst-Candidate analysand dyad.

As teachers and supervisors, psychoanalysts have a special responsibility to be aware of difficulties that can arise as a result of the asymmetry inherent in the course of relationships with candidates.

I) **Continuity**

Prior to a psychoanalyst’s death or unavailability the psychoanalyst shall, with due regard for patient confidentiality, make provision for each patient to be informed (including options for continuing treatment).

**SECTION III**

**Remedial Measures for the Psychoanalyst**

When the analyst becomes aware that personal difficulties or illness could potentially threaten or disturb the quality of his work, he should avail himself promptly of remedial measures. Any analyst who observes any such occurrence in a colleague should actively encourage and assist him to seek these measures. The analyst may alternatively report this to members designated by the Executive Council.

Adopted: June 1993


Revised: June 2001 – (Please note that Section II of the previous Principles of Ethics has been deleted following the June 2001 vote and that all subsequent sections have therefore been renumbered.)

Revised: July 2002

Revised: July 2007