

## 4.2 Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Conduct

The profession is responsible for the Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Conduct and shall educate and examine its members through the certification process.

### Code of Ethics

Ethical health management professionals should be governed by two basic concepts:

1. They must be competent. This means:
  - they must know the competencies for their area of practice, and
  - they must be able to successfully apply the competencies.
2. They must have integrity. This means:
  - they must have a keen sense of responsibility to their profession and employers and the public, and
  - they must retain a sense of independence that will enable them to exercise their professional judgment independently and without bias.

### Standards of Ethical Conduct

In order to comply with these two basic concepts the following Standards of Ethical Conduct apply to the Certified Aboriginal Health Managers (CAHM) members of the First Nations Health Managers Association (FNHMA). These standards serve to enhance confidence in the integrity and service of the CAHM. These Standards are not in any order of priority, rather they are to be used as required by the specifics of each situation.

#### 1. RESPONSIBILITIES TO INDIVIDUALS

- 1.1 Be exemplary, courteous and tactful in all interactions.
- 1.2 Ensure the communications of rights, responsibilities and information to foster informed decision-making.
- 1.3 Respect the customs and beliefs of others, consistent with the mission of the organization.
- 1.4 Respect the confidentiality of information, unless it is in the public interest or required by law to divulge information.
- 1.5 Promote competence and integrity with individuals associated with the organization.

#### 2. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ORGANIZATION

- 2.1 Strive to provide quality services.
- 2.2 Communicate truthfully and avoid misleading or raising unreasonable expectations in others.
- 2.3 Use sound health management practices and ethical use of resources.

#### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES TO COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

- 3.1 Serve the public interest in an ethical fashion and consider the effects of decisions on the community and society.

- 3.2 Abide by the laws of government and foster an environment where fairness applies and discrimination, harassment or abuse of any sort is opposed.
- 3.3 Contribute to improving the climate for aboriginal health management and a caring society.

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PROFESSION**

- 4.1 Develop and maintain competence in aboriginal health management and practice within one's abilities.
- 4.2 Support FNHMA in its efforts to enhance the profession of aboriginal health management.
- 4.3 Practice with honesty, integrity, respect, good faith and a caring attitude.
- 4.4 Assist others to develop competence in aboriginal health management and practice ethically.
- 4.5 Understand these Standards and report to FNHMA when there are reasonable grounds to believe a member has violated these Standards.

#### **5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

- 5.1 Conflict of interest exists when the CAHM uses position, authority or privileged information to:
  - a) obtain an improper benefit, directly or indirectly, or
  - b) obtain an improper benefit for a friend, relative or associate, or
  - c) make decisions that will negatively affect the organization.
  
- 5.2 The CAHM shall:
  - a) conduct all relationships in a way that assures those affected that decisions are not compromised by a conflict of interest;
  - b) disclose to the appropriate authority any direct or indirect personal or financial interest, or appointment or election which might create a conflict of interest;
  - c) neither accept nor offer personal gifts or benefits with the expectation or appearance of influencing a decision; and
  - d) refrain from using CAHM membership and credentials to promote or endorse commercial products or services where it would be perceived as an endorsement by CAHM.

**Certified Aboriginal Health Managers are members of the First Nations Health Managers Association and are required to comply with the Standards of Ethical Conduct and the administration thereof. Failure to comply may be cause for termination of membership in the First Nations Health Managers Association.**

## Code Administration

### PREAMBLE

The First Nations Health Managers Association (FNHMA) has adopted a Code of Ethics and Standards of Ethical Conduct for its members. The intent of this policy is to provide a reasonable and fair process for the administration of the standards.

### 1. LODGING A COMPLAINT

- 1.1 Any FNHMA member may lodge a complaint by notifying the President/Executive Director of the FNHMA that a Certified Aboriginal Health Manager's (CAHM) conduct appears to be contrary to the Standards. Complaints must be in writing and signed.
- 1.2 The FNHMA itself may formulate a complaint where information from a non-member or where the public record suggests conduct appears to be contrary to the Standards.
- 1.3 Only complaints initiated within one year of the incident or activities complained of will be reviewed.
- 1.4 The FNHMA shall provide the member concerned with a copy of the complaint within thirty days of its formulation.

### 2. REVIEWING THE COMPLAINT

- 2.1 The President of the FNHMA shall appoint a senior experienced CAHM to conduct a preliminary investigation of the complaint. The CAHM shall not be a member of the Board or an employee of FNHMA.
- 2.2 The CAHM's investigation shall be a fact-finding mission regarding the conduct of the member accused. The CAHM shall secure evidence through documentation and interviews necessary for a Special Ethics Committee of the Board specifically established to consider the complaint. The CAHM must invite the member concerned to present documentation and all appropriate facts.
- 2.3 The CAHM shall submit a full written report to the Special Ethics Committee within ninety days of the receipt of the complaint. The report should indicate whether or not a hearing is merited.

### 3. SPECIAL ETHICS COMMITTEE

- 3.1 A Special Ethics Committee appointed by the Board when required shall receive the CAHM's report. No further action will be taken about the complaint if the committee indicates no possible breach of the Standards has occurred. Both the member and the complainant will be so informed.
- 3.2 Where the committee determines that the findings of the preliminary investigation warrant that a hearing occur the Special Ethics Committee will notify the member and complainant that a hearing will be held.
- 3.3 Notification shall specify that the member and complainant may be present, may be represented and may examine documentation and evidence received by the Special Ethics Committee. The notice shall also indicate the date and place of the hearing.
- 3.4 If the member whose conduct is the subject of the hearing does not attend, the hearing may proceed in absence of the member.
- 3.5 The hearing is not a judicial process. The principal of fairness and confidentiality shall characterize the hearings.
- 3.6 The Special Ethics Committee should issue a decision to the member and the complainant within 30 days of the completion of the hearing.

### 4. SANCTIONS

4.1 Should the Special Ethics Committee determine that a breach of the Standards has occurred, the Special Ethics Committee may decide upon the following sanctions:

**Letter of Admonition** Where a minor impropriety has occurred but no breach of the Standards has occurred, the Committee can issue a letter of admonishment to the member.

**Censure** Where a clear breach of the Standards has been found, but the breach is not of sufficient gravity to warrant a change in the member's status with FNHMA, the Committee can issue a letter of censure.

**Suspension and Probation** Where a clear breach of the Standards has been found, of a more severe nature, but still not warranting expulsion, the Committee can suspend and place the member on probation for a fixed period of time and with certain conditions.

**Expulsion** For gross breaches of the Standards, the Committee can expel a member.

4.2 The sanction shall be in writing and placed in the member's file. For sanctions, except expulsions, the FNHMA shall not publicize the member's name to other members of AFOA, or to the member's employer. Members who have been expelled from membership will have their names recorded in a notice to that effect; such notice shall be placed in the newsletter or magazine or on the website of FNHMA.

4.3 Where the Committee believes the membership as a whole might benefit from hearing about compliance or interpretation on matters pertaining to the Standards, the Committee may publish information in the newsletter without revealing the individual or location that prompted the interpretation.

## **5. APPEAL**

A member or complainant may be allowed to appeal the Special Ethics Committee decision. The appeal shall be made to the FNHMA Board and must be within 30 days of notification of the hearing's final decision. After due notice to all parties concerned, the FNHMA Board shall hear the appeal and make a decision. The decision of the Board is final.