Code of Ethics

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American Dental Association Code

- ✓ The dental profession holds a special position of trust within society. As a consequence, society affords the profession certain privileges.
- ✓ In return, the profession makes a commitment to society that its members will adhere to high ethical standards of behavior.
- ✓ These standards are included in the ADA Code.
- ✓ The ADA Code is, a written expression of the obligations arising from the agreement between the dental profession and society.
- ✓ The continued public trust in the dental profession is based on the commitment of individual dentists to high ethical standards of conduct.

American Dental Association Code

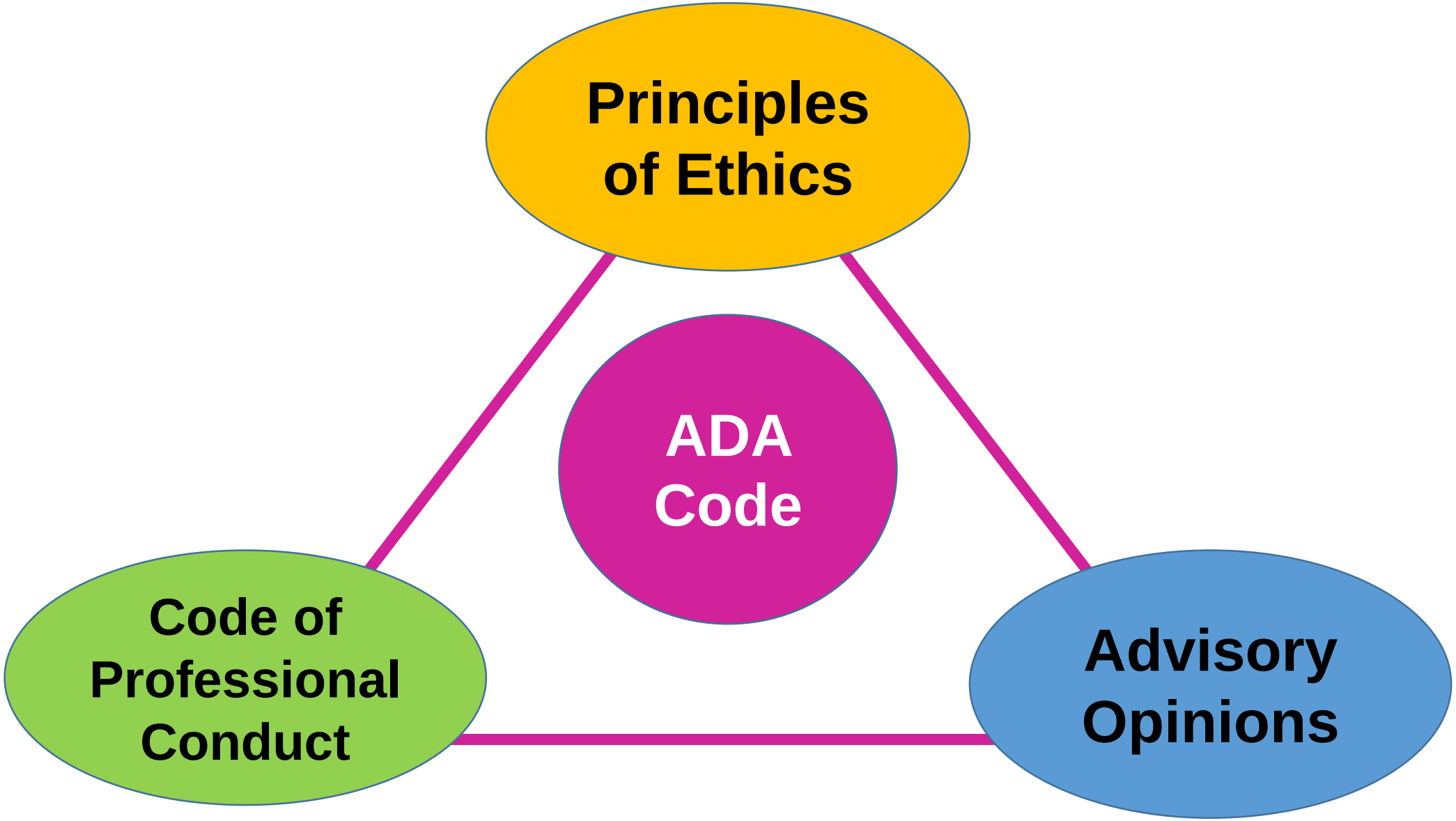
- ✓ Profession has certain privileges.
- ✓ Commitment to society → High ethical standards of behavior.
- ✓ ADA Code.
- ✓ Written obligations
- ✓ Agreement between the dental profession and society.

American Dental Association Code

The ADA Code has three main components:

- ✓ Principles of Ethics
- ✓ Code of Professional Conduct
- ✓ Advisory Opinions.

American Dental Association Code



Principles of Ethics

There are 5 fundamental principles (مبادئ) that form the foundation of the ADA Code:



Code of Professional Conduct

- ✓ Types of conduct (behavior)
- ✓ that are either required or prohibited (مطلوبة أو محظورة).
- ✓ It is the legislative system (النظام التشريعي).

Advisory Opinions (الآراء الاستشارية)

It provides guidance to the members on how to interpret the Code of Professional Conduct in a disciplinary proceeding.
(تفسير قواعد السلوك المهني في تحديد نوع التقصير والعقوبة الخاصة به)

Code of Professional Conduct

- ✓ Types of behavior

required  **prohibited**

- ✓ Legislative system (النظام التشريعي).

Advisory Opinions (الآراء الاستشارية)

- ✓ Interpret disciplinary proceeding

(a legal action taken against a licensed professional for their unethical conduct)

1- Patient Autonomy “self-governance”

a. The dentist should inform the patient of the proposed treatment, and any reasonable alternatives, in a manner that allows the patient to become involved in treatment decisions.
b. Dentists are obliged to safeguard the privacy of patient records, except as required by law
c. Upon request of a patient or another dental practitioner, dentists shall provide any information that will be beneficial for the future treatment of that patient.
d. This obligation exists whether or not the patient’s account is paid in full.

1- Patient Autonomy “self-governance”

a. Treatment ……. alternatives ……. decisions

b. Patient records  law

c. Upon request

d. Paid in full

2- Nonmaleficence “do no harm”

- ✓ The professionals are obligated to protect the patient from harm by:

(1) Keeping knowledge and skills current (CME)
(2) Knowing one’s own limitations
(3) When to refer to a specialist or other professional

Note: the dentists have an ethical obligation to immediately inform any patient who may have been exposed to infectious material in the dental office to immediately refer the patient to a qualified health care practitioner

2- Nonmaleficence (الايذاء) “do no harm”

- ✓ **Avoid harm by:**

a. **CME**
b. **Limitations**
c. **Refer**

Exposed to infection ➡ immediate inform ➡ immediate refer

3- Beneficence “do good”

- ✓ Dentists have ethical obligations to provide care for patients according to the patient’s desires and wishes, as long as the treatment is within the scope of what is acceptable without causing the patient harm or impacting the public. During public health crises or emergencies, the dentist’s ethical obligation to the public may supersede the dentist’s ethical obligations to individual patients. During public health crises, the dentist should weigh the risk to the patient and the public from performing dental procedure, elective or non-emergent procedure postponed, while emergent condition necessities treatment of the patient.
- ✓ Dentists have the obligation of making the results and benefits of their investigative efforts available to all when they are useful in promoting the public health.
- ✓ Dentists are ethically obliged to identify and report suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect and according to the law
- ✓ Dentists are the leaders of the oral healthcare team, so their behavior in the workplace is essential for maintaining qualified professional relationships among team members, and increasing the quality of patient care provided, and serve the public health

3- Beneficence “do good”

✓ Care desire acceptable no public harm

✓ **Public health crises:**

Public ethical obligation

Emergent treatment



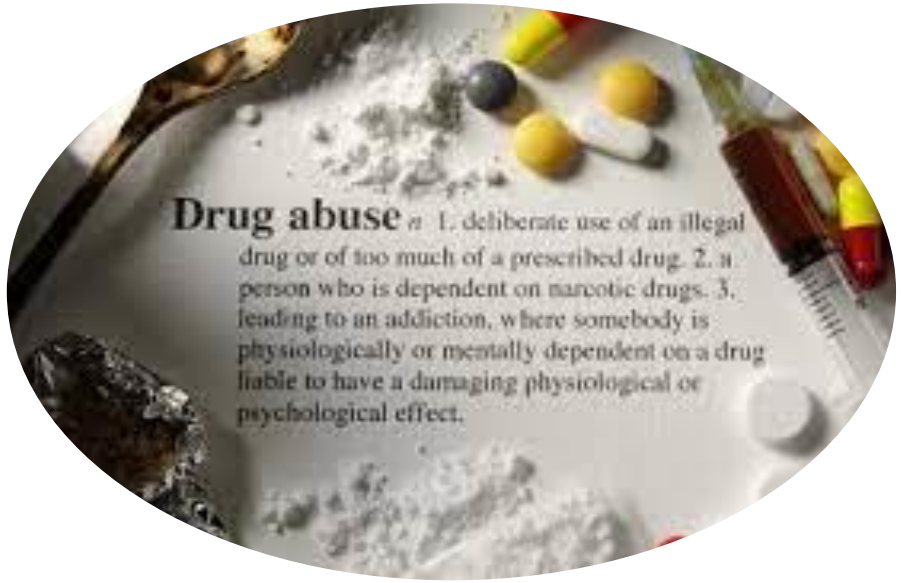
Dental ethical obligations

Elective treatment

✓ Benefits of their investigation

3- Beneficence “do good”

- ✓ **Abuse AND/OR neglect**



- ✓ **Leaders ?**

4- Justice “Fairness”

- ✓ Dentists are obligated to be fair in their dealings with patients, colleagues and society. So they shall not refuse or accept patients into their practice based on patient’s race, color, gender, or disability.
- ✓ If the patient has a physical or mental disability, or infected with contagious infections (like Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B Virus, Hepatitis C Virus), or medically compromised (heart diseases, diabetic,…), the individual dentist should determine if the patient in need of another’s skills, knowledge, equipment or expertise, and if so, consultation or referral should be done.
- ✓ Dentist is obliged to be prepared for emergency cases, preparation include well practice and equipment.
- ✓ Dentists is obliged to report continual faulty treatment by other dentists. Patients should be informed of their present oral health status without disparaging comment about prior services.

4- Justice “Fairness”

✓Dealings with patients, colleagues and society.

✓**Refuse**  Accept patients

race, color, gender, or disability.

✓**Treat**  **Refer**

contagious infections or medically compromised

4- Justice “Fairness”

- ✓Cases of emergency



- ✓Continual faulty treatment by other dentists

5- Veracity “Truthfulness”

- ✓ The dentist is obligated to respect the position of trust inherent in the dentist- patient relationship and communicating truthfully
- ✓ Ex: replacement of perfect amalgam filling with another filling material based on the concept of removing toxic effect of amalgam which is scientifically not approved is not ethical
- ✓ It is unethical for a dentist to increase a fee to a patient based on his financial status
- ✓ The dentist is obligated to use approved safe material and devices in treating his patients
- ✓ Dentists should not misrepresent their training in any way that would be false or misleading

5- Veracity “Truthfulness”

- ✓Respect the position of trust

Ex:



- ✓Fees <<<<<<<<<< Financial status
- ✓Approved safe material and devices
- ✓Misrepresent their training