

# POSNA Principles of Medical Ethics and Professionalism

The following *POSNA Principles of Medical Ethics and Professionalism* have been adopted by the Board of Directors of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America. They are not laws, but rather standards of conduct that define the essentials of honorable behavior for members of POSNA.

**I. Practitioner-Patient Relationship.** The primary purpose of a practitioner who is a member of POSNA is providing patient-centered care for the pediatric patient and the family. The relationship with the patient is the central focus of all ethical concerns. Members of POSNA should be dedicated to providing competent medical service to the patient with compassion and respect. A POSNA member should communicate openly and honestly with patients, families, and members of healthcare teams.

**II. Integrity.** A POSNA member should maintain a reputation for truth and honesty with families and colleagues, and should strive to expose through the appropriate review process those colleagues who are deficient in character or competence or who engage in fraud or deception.

**III. Legalities and Honor.** A POSNA member must obey the law, uphold the dignity and honor of the profession, and accept the profession's self-imposed discipline. The POSNA member also has a responsibility to seek changes in legal requirements that are contrary to the best interest of the patient.

**IV. Conflicts of Interest.** Medical practice inherently presents potential conflicts of interest. Wherever a conflict of interest arises, it must be resolved in the best interest of patient care. The POSNA member should exercise all reasonable alternatives to ensure that the most appropriate care is provided to the patient. If a conflict of interest cannot be resolved, the POSNA member should notify the patient of his or her intention to withdraw from the care of the patient without abandonment.

**V. Confidentiality.** A POSNA member should respect the rights of patients, of research subjects, of colleagues, and of other health professionals. A member of POSNA must safeguard patient privacy and family confidences within the constraints of the law.

**VI. Medical Knowledge.** A POSNA member continually must strive to maintain and improve knowledge of medicine and research, and to make relevant information available to patients, colleagues, and the public.

**VII. Cooperation.** Healthy relationships among physicians, nurses, and health care professionals are essential for good patient care. POSNA members should promote the development of an expert health care team that will work together harmoniously to provide optimal patient care.

**VIII. Remuneration.** Remuneration for orthopaedic services or research should be commensurate with the services rendered. Members of POSNA should deliver high quality, cost-effective care without discrimination.

**IX. Publicity.** A POSNA member should not publicize himself or herself through any medium or form of public communication in an untruthful, misleading, or deceptive manner.

**X. Societal Responsibility.** The POSNA member has a responsibility not only to the individual patient, to colleagues and associates-in-training, but also to society as a whole. Activities that have the purpose of improving the health and well-being of the patient and/or the community in a cost-effective way deserve the interest, support, and participation of members of POSNA.

This material was modified from the AAOS *Principles of Medical Ethics and Professionalism in Orthopaedic Surgery* with the express written permission of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.