

SMA CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Members engaged in the accepted practice of Sports Massage, having satisfied the Board of the Sports Massage Association of their competence in sports massage, shall adhere to the following Code of Conduct and Ethics and comply with the Sports Massage Association Code of Practice.

Members shall :

- a) Act honourably towards their clients and fellow practitioners at all times. They must uphold and maintain the high standards of the profession. They must seek good relationships and co-operate with other health care professionals.
- b) Maintain the high standard of professional conduct appropriate to membership of the Sports Massage Association (SMA) in which the interest and welfare of the client are deemed to be paramount.
- c) Respect the client/practitioner relationship, the confidentiality of the client endeavouring to foster and maintain trust at all times.
- d) Be sensitive to client in regard to modesty and special needs e.g. language difficulties, disability or if they wish a companion to be present.
- e) Respect the views and beliefs of their clients in regard to gender, ethnic origins, culture, sexuality, lifestyle, age and social status.
- f) Maintain good communication at all times thus ensuring the client understands and has consented to all procedures. Where a client is unable to consent, then consent must be obtained from someone who can consent, on the client's behalf.
- g) Observe the highest degree of integrity and responsibility in regard to the practice of Sports Massage, working within their professional competence.
- h) To respect totally the confidentiality of the relationship of practitioner to patient.
- i) Respect the client's autonomy and allow them a choice and never take advantage of the power that exists in a practitioner/client relationship. This would constitute abuse.
- j) Be prepared and competent to administer emergency procedures as may be required by the client, and to maintain such procedures until relieved.
- k) Seek appropriate advice in any situation in which the practitioner may lack the necessary competence or experience.
- l) Maintain careful records of all clients in regard to a full medical history and presenting complaint, assessment and procedures performed, and then keeping up to date medical records, clinical findings to the level of competence gained, information and advice given and any comments made plus details of any suggested referral. Records are the property of the client. To safeguard themselves and their clients, practitioners should complete records for each client and if in doubt as to the client's health or the suitability of the treatment, the client should be advised to consult a doctor. This advice should be recorded.
- m) When records are kept on a computer, registration with the database authorities is required.
- n) Provide information (if requested) to other health & sport professionals with client's written consent only. This may include trainers, coaches and managers involved.
- o) Members must refrain from criticising fellow practitioners and must not attempt to entice clients away from another practitioner(s) providing sports massage.
- p) Report all notifiable disease states according to applicable laws.
- q) Ensure by means of continuous update of information and training, a level of competence consistent with the highest standards of the profession.
- r) Abstain from any claim or statement misrepresenting the benefits of sports massage.
- s) Deal with complaints and criticisms efficiently.
- t) Maintain a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolio which must contain 40 hours sports massage training per annum or 80 hours over two years.
- u) Any Member of the SMA undertaking research must adhere to the code of ethics and standards laid down by the relevant Ethics Committee.
- v) Insurance
Members must hold the recommended SMA professional indemnity and public liability insurance cover or an equivalent.

- w) **Personal:**
A practitioner should at all times maintain the modest and correct demeanour expected of the professional person, both in a public and private capacity. Abuse of alcohol, drugs, or good order is deemed to be a serious offence against this code.
- x) **Records:**
An accurate record of patient details and treatments is required. These confidential records must be kept in a secure place, properly safeguarded and not accessible to third parties. Client notes should be kept for at least seven years and, in the case of children, up to a minimum of 21 years of age.
- y) **Referrals:**
Practitioners should observe the recognised form of client referral.
- z) **Conduct**
A practitioner of sports massage may not:
- i) Address or refer to an assistant as 'Nurse' unless the person referred to holds a nursing qualification in the country in which the practitioner is operating a clinic.
 - ii) Call himself/herself 'Doctor' unless he/she holds a recognised medical qualification or PhD in the country in which the Member is practicing.
 - iii) Call himself/herself 'Physiotherapist' unless he/she is a member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.
 - iv) Call himself/herself 'physical therapist' unless he/she holds a qualification recognised by the SMA to allow the Member to do so.
 - v) Undertake any physical examination or treatment of a child under sixteen years except in the presence of the parent or an authorised person, or without parental consent.
 - vi) Undertake to attend women in childbirth or treat them 10 days thereafter without permission from the healthcare professional unless they hold an appropriate qualification in midwifery.
 - vii) Undertake to treat clients who are mentally unstable addicted to drugs or alcohol, severely depressed, suicidal, or hallucinating unless they have the necessary competence.
 - viii) Make any written or unwritten claims in regard to the 'curative' benefits of sports massage.
 - ix) Apply sports massage to a person who is receiving medical treatment for the same condition without the respective practitioner's consent.
 - x) Treat animals without express permission from a veterinary surgeon.
- aa) **Premises:**
- i) Treatment areas must be hygienic and equipped to clinical standards and must comply with current health and safety regulations.
 - ii) Staff facilities and public areas (waiting rooms, hallways, stairs, toilet facilities etc.) must comply with current health and safety regulations.
- bb) **Security:**
Practitioners must ensure that the client's confidential records are properly safeguarded and not accessible to third parties. Client's belongings should also be kept in a safe place.
- cc) **Advertising:**
Advertising and professional leaflets must never make exaggerated claims for cures. Sports Massage practitioners shall be free to advertise their services and practices as they see fit, subject to any advertisements:
- i) Being legal, decent, honest and truthful and in accordance with the British Code of Advertising Practice or appropriate overseas code.
 - ii) Not being of a character that could reasonably be regarded as likely to bring the profession into disrepute.
 - iii) Not being such as to abuse the trust of existing or potential clients or exploit their lack of knowledge.
- dd) **Stationery and Name Plates**
- i) Professional letterheads should be of good quality and print. Name plates on buildings and windows should be of modest size.
 - ii) A full member may use the logo of the Sports Massage Association on business stationery only but otherwise at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

ee) Discipline

The Board of the Sports Massage Association may, on investigation, de-register any student or full member contravening the spirit or letter of the Association's Code of Ethics and/or Code of Practice or on the grounds of any other act which it may consider to reflect adversely on the good name and reputation of the Association or present a risk to the public.

Allegations will, in the first instance, be assessed by a Complaint Investigation Committee comprising at least 3 members of the current Board. If they believe there is a potential case to answer the allegation(s) will be passed on to the Association's Fitness to Practice Panel for investigation. The Panel will include an experienced SMA member, a lay person and one or two Board members.

The Fitness to Practice Panel will investigate any allegations against a member of the Association of any conduct that falls short of the standard required. The Fitness to Practice Panel will also consider allegations of professional misconduct and serious impairment due to ill health of any member of the Association referred to it by the Complaint Investigation Committee.

ff) Complaints Procedure

Complaints should be put in writing in the first instance to the SMA using the appropriate form which is available on line from www.thesma.org or from the SMA's administration Office, who will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days. In certain circumstances, complaints can also be made by telephone.

ff) Complaints Procedure

Complaints should be put in writing in the first instance to the Chair of the Complaint Investigation Panel who will acknowledge receipt within 10 working days.

gg) Publications

Nothing may be published in the name of the Sports Massage Association without the prior agreement of the Board, or sub-committee or Member acting with the full authority of the Board.

hh) Appeals may be requested with the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Sports Massage Association.

- The Children Act and the guidance regulations insists that young children are involved in the consent process if possible. The Children Act gives clear guidance to professionals when abuse of children is discovered.
- When evidence of abuse is acquired (physical, sexual or psychological), urgent discussions with a senior colleague with a relevant referral to an appropriate professional such as a doctor, or health visitor or agency such as Social Services are essential. Handling and contact must be carefully explained and clients adequately prepared.