

Ethical Code

European Music Therapy Confederation

Introduction

Music therapists belonging to organisations within the EMTC agree to work with social and legal responsibility. This entails personal responsibility towards the therapeutic task and towards those persons with whom they enter into a therapeutic relationship.

This Code of Ethics serves to protect patients/clients against unethical practices, to orientate members in their professional behaviour, and as a foundation for all ethical codes concerning individual organisations within the EMTC.

1. Applicability

1.1. Ethical Codes of EMTC member organisations shall be compatible with the EMTC Ethical Code.

1.2. The EMTC Ethical Code and those of EMTC member organisations shall apply to individual professional members.

1.3. Each Ethical Code of an EMTC member organisation shall include, or refer to, an agreed definition of music therapy as practised by its members.

2. Purpose

2.1. The primary purpose of the EMTC Ethical Code and of the Ethical Codes of EMTC member organisations shall be to protect patients/clients from harm resulting from unethical behaviour, and to ensure that their welfare shall at all times take precedence over all other considerations.

2.2. The subsidiary purpose of the EMTC Ethical Code and of Ethical Codes of EMTC member organisations shall serve, directly or indirectly, to the above primary purpose.

2.3. The above purpose shall take priority over member organisations' other legitimate aims, such as the protection, welfare and professional development of members, the advancement of the profession and the protection of the title of 'music therapist'.

3 General professional duties

3.1. The music therapist shall act in accordance with the agreed quality standards applicable to her/his particular role.

3.2. The music therapist shall comply with all relevant requirements, whether European, national or local.

3.3. The music therapist in employment shall not engage in any official or unofficial industrial action which brings her/him into conflict with the primary purpose of protecting patients'/clients' safety and best interests.

3.4. The music therapist shall make all reasonable attempts to maintain and extend her/his knowledge and skills by means of appropriate in-service training and supervision, i.e. Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

4 Specific responsibilities to patients/clients

4.1. The music therapist shall be aware of the degree of dependency inherent to a therapeutic relationship. (S) he shall in no circumstance act in order to satisfy her/his own personal interests, (e.g. emotional, sexual, social, or economic interests).

4.2. The music therapist shall work on the basis of an explicit agreement with the patient/client and/or her/his parent/carer as appropriate. *This should cover:*

- a) the music therapeutic orientation;
- b) the scope and approximate duration of treatment;
- c) fees (where applicable);
- d) an explanation of the confidential nature of the therapy and, in the case of a child or young person, any limitation on confidentiality imposed by child protection law.

4.3. The music therapist shall not treat patients/clients whose particular therapeutic needs he/she is not competent to meet. This includes cases where techniques outside the scope of the therapist's training are required.

4.4. Treatment shall only be given following a referral/self-referral. The music therapist shall not solicit custom, nor make or publish misleading claims as to the likely outcome of treatment.

4.5. The music therapist shall be responsible for the physical safety of the patient/client during therapy sessions, and shall make her/himself aware of any condition (such as epilepsy) requiring rapid access to medical assistance or special equipment.

4.6. The music therapist shall not carry out assessment, treatment, training, supervision or research while mentally or physically unfit to do so.

4.7. Where not covered by institutional insurance, the music therapist shall have her/his own professional indemnity insurance.

5. Responsibility to trainees, interns and supervisees

5.1. The individual or group therapy of a student therapist shall not be given by any person connected with the theoretical training, supervision and internship of that student.

5.2. Staff or training institutions who have serious doubts about a student's development into a competent therapist shall inform that student and also the appropriate authorities.

5.3. The trainer/supervisor shall not delegate clinical responsibility to a student or supervisee without adequate supervision.

6. Confidentiality and data protection

6.1. The music therapist shall protect the confidentiality of information gained in the course of a client's/patient's treatment.

Exceptions:

a) general information strictly necessary for the coordination of the local treatment regime for that client/patient may be shared with appropriate professionals;

b) with the client's/patient's/carer's permission, appropriate information may be shared for training purposes with trainees, who shall be bound by the same requirement of confidentiality like the therapist;

c) with the client's/patient's/carer's permission, appropriate anonymous information may be published or presented as part of a case study or research project;

d) in the case of a child or young person, if required by court or law, information relevant to the Child Protection Authorities must be disclosed.

7. Research

7.1. In all research involving clients/patients either directly or indirectly, priority shall be given to their best interests and their safety as already set out in sections 4 and 6 above.

7.2. Authorisation from a medical and/or academic ethical committee shall be obtained before commencing research.

7.3. The intellectual property of colleagues shall be used respectfully. The contribution of collaborators shall be clearly acknowledged in any presentation or publication.

8. Professional relations

8.1. The music therapist shall strive for good and mutually supportive working relationships with colleagues.

8.2. The music therapist shall refrain from disparaging remarks about colleagues, and in case of conflict shall seek a mutually acceptable solution.

9. Equality of opportunity

9.1. Insofar as it lies within the music therapist's discretion, patients/clients shall have equal rights of access to assessment and treatment regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or any form of disability not relevant to the advisability or otherwise of treatment.

9.2. Insofar as it lies within the music therapist's discretion, candidates for training, prospective supervisees, applicants for professional recognition or research funding shall not be discriminated against on grounds of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or any form of disability which does not affect competence.

10. Enforcement of Ethical Code

10.1. EMTC member organisations shall investigate alleged breaches of their Ethical Codes and, where necessary, discipline members appropriately.

10.2. The EMTC as a whole has a duty to monitor how effectively the member organisations deal with the foregoing procedures.

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