



## Code of Ethics for Sports Trainers

***It is the primary role of the Sports Trainer to make sport and recreation safer. This is achieved by implementing appropriate injury prevention regimes.***

The Sports Trainer must clearly understand their defined roles and responsibilities and has a moral responsibility to work within the limits of their qualifications, and hence not assume roles outside of those predetermined ones. In keeping within the limits of their qualifications the Sports Trainer must, if appropriate, refer to a physician, physical therapist, or other allied health professional for further advice, treatment and management.

As members of the SA Sports Medicine Association (SASMA), Sports Trainers have an ethical responsibility to their clients, society and other health professionals. The following ethical foundations for Sports Trainers in the field of Sports First Aider/Trainer serve as a Code of Ethics for practicing professionals. The Code implements many of these foundations in the form of rules of ethical conduct. Noncompliance with the Code may affect an individual's initial or continuing status as a recognised certified Sports Trainer by SASMA, and this could lead to the possibility of having their certification/accreditation revoked.

### Ethical Foundations

- 1. Sports Trainer – Client (athlete) relationship:** The welfare of the athlete is central to all considerations in the *Sports Trainer – Client (athlete)* relationship. This includes the obligation of the Sports Trainer to respect the rights of athletes, colleagues and other health professionals, and to communicate only factual information and not to misrepresent competency on any level. In the case of injury, applying appropriate initial management procedures, and referring injuries as necessary. Ensure that both athletes and Sports Trainer's actions are at all times unambiguously professional, and appreciate the importance of seeking to defuse anxiety and apprehension before physically touching an athlete by means of verbal explanation of the Sports Trainer's intention.
- 2. Sports Trainer conduct and practice:** The Sports Trainer should deal honestly with athletes and colleagues. This includes not misrepresenting him/herself through any form of communication.  
Maintenance of professional competence is an obligation of the practising Sports Trainer. This can be achieved by complying with re-accreditation requirements.  
Sports Trainers are trained to provide definite skills and knowledge (as outlined in roles and responsibilities document) to sport clubs/sporting events, and it is acceptable to receive remuneration for their time involvement with that club/event. It is, however, clearly inappropriate and outside of the role of the Sports First Aider/Trainer to offer him/herself as a primary health care practitioner and charge on a fee-for-service basis. If a Sports Trainer is found to be acting outside of the above ethical foundations they will be investigated by SASMA and possibly have their certification/accreditation revoked.
- 3. Professional relations:** The Sports Trainer should respect and co-operate with other Sports Trainers and allied health professionals. Sports Trainers should not represent themselves qualified to perform roles which are outside the scope of SASMA's Sports Trainers Roles and Responsibilities.
- 4. Societal responsibilities:** As a recognised certified Sports Trainer of SASMA, Sports Trainers are required to uphold the dignity and honour of the profession and comply with professional standards of practice. Commercial promotions of injury prevention and treatment products and services may generate bias unrelated to product/treatment merit. The Sports Trainer should be aware of this potential conflict of interest and offer advice that is evidence based and accurate, without bias.

## **Code of Conduct**

### ***Client (athlete) – Sports Trainer Relationship***

1. The Sports Trainer should serve their athletes by exercising all reasonable means to ensure that the most appropriate injury prevention methods and recommendations are provided to the client/s.
2. The Athlete – Sports Trainer relationship is built on confidentiality, trust and honesty. The Sports Trainer must adhere to all applicable legal and/or contractual constraints whilst in the ‘Athlete – Sports Trainer’ relationship.
3. It is not ethical to recommend, refer, prescribe, provide or seek compensation for treatment or products that are of no benefit to the athlete.
4. The Sports Trainer should not discriminate against athletes based on race, colour, national origin, religion or any other basis that would constitute illegal discrimination.
5. Sexual misconduct on the part of the Sports Trainer is an abuse of professional power and a violation of athlete trust.
6. The Sports Trainer should not practice or attempt to provide professional services to an athlete while impaired by alcohol, drugs of any kind, or physical or mental disability. If a Sports Trainer experiences any of these above mentioned problems they should seek appropriate assistance to address them and limit his/her professional practice until the impairment no longer affects the quality of the athlete service.

***Respect and education are vital in any successful attempt to promote the role of the Sports Trainer in making sport and recreation safer in an ethical context.***

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I certify that I have read the *SASMA Code of Ethics for Sports Trainers*. I agree to comply with this code in its entirety.

I understand my responsibility to promptly report any incident of misconduct or perceived misconduct that I may witness or experience.

By signing this acknowledgement I am indicating that I have read and will abide by *SASMA's Code of Ethics for Sports Trainers*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Sports Trainer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sports Trainer name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*SASMA Copy*

*Sports Trainers Copy*