Academy of Lactation Policy and Practice (ALPP)
Code of Ethics for Advanced Lactation Consultants (ALC) and
Advanced Nurse Lactation Consultants (ANLC)

Preamble to the Code of Ethics

Ethical principles should guide both the decisions an ALC/ANLC makes and the actions they take. Therefore, the standards relating to conduct are integrated within the Code of Ethics.

ALPP Code of Ethics for Certified Lactation Counselors

The ALC/ANLC must practice in compliance with the following principles:

Autonomy

A. Assist the parent in maintaining one's own autonomy, acknowledging that the parent is free to make informed decisions for oneself and the baby that are free of coercion.
B. Obtain parental consent to help the parent/baby dyad with breastfeeding.
C. Obtain parental consent to photograph, audiotape, or videotape the parent(s) and/or the infant(s) for educational or professional purposes.

Veracity

D. Provide to all persons truthful and accurate information with respect to the professional performance of duties.
E. Provide accurate and truthful documentation of lactation care.
F. Accurate documentation is an important indication that the ALC/ANLC is practicing within their Scope of Practice and following the ALPP code of ethics.

Beneficience

G. Promote and encourage the highest level of ethics within the profession.
H. Strive for excellence in all aspects of the field.
I. Consistently perform at or above the standards acceptable to the field in order to foster the best outcomes for families and demonstrate respect for professionals in the field.
J. Increase professional growth and knowledge by attending appropriate educational and training programs.
K. Contribute knowledge to professional meetings and journals to raise the consciousness of the field.
L. Maintain the highest standards of safety and any other responsibilities.

Nonmaleficence

M. Recognize and discharge personal responsibility to uphold all laws and regulations relating to lactation counseling policies and activities.
N. Use only legal and ethical means in all activities.
O. Protect the public against fraud and unfair practices and attempt to eliminate all practices that bring discredit to the profession.
P. Abide by the *International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes* and subsequent resolutions which pertain to health workers.
Q. When providing services or products, consider adequate or appropriate liability insurance.
R. Understand, recognize, respect, and acknowledge intellectual property rights, including but not limited to copyrights (which apply to written material, photographs, slides, illustrations, etc.), trademarks, service marks, and patents.
S. Report violations of Scope of Practice to ALPP.
T. Notify ALPP if convicted of criminal misconduct.

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Confidentiality

U. Maintain strict client confidentiality. Report safety issues to the appropriate authority, following the laws relating to confidentiality.
V. Maintain professional and confidential records and documentation following legal and ethical practices. Falsifying documents is professional misconduct.
W. Stay up to date with state and local laws regarding confidentiality and reporting in special circumstances (e.g. domestic violence).

Justice

X. Avoid discrimination against other individuals on the basis of race, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
Y. Refuse any gift, favor, or hospitality from patients or clients currently in her/his care that might be interpreted as seeking to exert influence to obtain preferential consideration.

Role Fidelity

Z. Maintain the highest standards of personal conduct practicing within the legal constraints of the individual's Scope of Practice to protect client safety and to bring credit to the lactation field.
AA. Refer clients to appropriate medical and other resources for issues beyond the certificant's Scope of Practice.
BB. Cooperate with professional colleagues to provide the highest quality service.
CC. Extend these same professional commitments to all those persons supervised or employed.
DD. Disclose any financial or other conflicts of interest in relevant organizations providing goods or services. Ensure that professional judgment is not influenced by any commercial considerations.
EE. Notify the ALPP Director of Operations if, through circumstances foreseen or unforeseen, if the certificant is unable to perform the essential functions of the ALC/ANLC role with or without reasonable accommodation.

All ALCs and ANLCs are required to subscribe to ALPP's Code Ethics.

Disciplinary action, up to and including permanent revocation of the credential may be taken if certificants are found to be in violation of any of the aspects of the code of ethics.

Edge, R.S. & Groves, J. R. (1999) Ethics of health care: A guide for clinical practice (2nd ed.). San Juan Metro, Manila: C&E Publishing, Inc.. pp.39-51.