

# Spinal Cord Injury Ontario Code of Ethics

At Spinal Cord Injury Ontario, we are committed to being an integral part of the communities we serve. We are responsible for acting professionally and in a client-centred manner; upholding the dignity and honour of our clients and stakeholders; and practising in accordance with professional ethical principles.

This Code of Ethics is intended to provide us with specific ethical principles to address situations that we may encounter, and to guide us in our relationships and decisions involving clients, employees and other stakeholders. This code is not intended to replace current laws, codes or standards of practice but rather to complement them.

**Advocacy:** We have the responsibility to help improve the awareness, the accessibility and the quality of our services by advocating on behalf of our clients. We will seek guidance both internally and externally for those situations that could place the organization and/or its clients at risk.

**Client and Employee Safety:** We recognize that the community setting represents a unique environment for employees. We will take available steps to assess and minimize risk to clients, while being sensitive to their wishes. We will also take necessary measures to ensure the personal safety of employees, and safety concerns of both clients and employees will be reported and addressed in a supportive and non-threatening way.

**Commitment to Quality:** We are committed to providing the highest level of quality in our services to benefit clients and employees within available resources. SCI Ontario will evaluate its' services and programs and implement quality improvements.

**Confidentiality:** Personal and personal health information is confidential. We will ensure that clients and their legal substitute are informed of their right to consent to the sharing of necessary information with individuals and organizations directly involved in the client's services. Confidentiality and privacy rights will be respected for all employees and stakeholders.

**Conflict of Interest:** We will not compromise services to our clients or other stakeholders for our own personal benefit. Should there be a perceived or possible Conflict of Interest, it will be reported

to the manager or supervisor, and documented for transparency. Examples- gift acceptance and personal fundraising.

**Dignity:** In all our interactions we will demonstrate profound respect for human dignity. We will be responsive and sensitive to the diversity among our clients and staff groups. We will also recognize the client's right to dignity of risk that is inherent in the Independent Living philosophy and will respect their rights and choices.

**Fair and Equitable Access:** We believe that each individual is entitled to an assessment. We will ensure that services are based on clients' needs, regardless of their income, age, gender, ethnicity or race, physical or mental ability, and any other factors such as diverse behaviors or lifestyle. Informed

**Choice and Empowerment:** We believe that most individuals have the ability and right to make decisions about their health. We will assist clients to make individualized service plans and life choices in keeping with the client's values, beliefs and health care goals. We will ensure that clients are fully informed of their options and have all the information they need to make informed decisions about their health. Following due process, if the client is determined to be incapable of making these decisions, we will take directions from the client's substitute decision maker.

**Community Agency Relationships:** We recognize there may be a competitive element in our working relationships, however we agree to respect one another's roles and to work together in the spirit of transparency and collaboration to maximize the effectiveness of client services.

**Respecting Each Other:** We value Spinal Cord Injury Ontario and what the organization stands for. We will work to protect its' reputation by honouring our history, being diligent in the present and planning for the future.

**Working in Teams:** We will be individually accountable for our actions, work with and accept different perspectives, and be unified in our mission, vision and values. We will acknowledge individual and team contributions and learn from our experiences rather than assign blame.

**Growing Our People:** We will provide opportunities for professional development, evaluate performance objectively and apply our policies and procedures consistently.