



The National Association of Perinatal Social Workers

CODE OF ETHICS

The following principles are intended as a guide to social workers practicing in all aspects of perinatal social work. They represent standards of behavior for perinatal social workers in their professional relationships with clients, colleagues and employers, with other professionals, and with the community and society as a whole. They are also intended to embody standards of personal behavior associated with the individual's identity as a perinatal social worker.

This code is based on a fundamental belief in the importance of the family, and on the uniqueness and worth of each individual child and parent.

I. The Social Worker's Conduct as a Perinatal Social Worker

- A. Seek to maintain a high standard of personal conduct, to deal honestly with colleagues and families.
- B. Distinguish between actions and statements made as a representative of the profession, an organization or an employer and those made as a private individual.
- C. Actively resist influence/pressure that would interfere with the exercise of professional judgment; do not use professional relationships with colleagues or with clients for personal gain.

II. The Perinatal Social Worker's Responsibility to Clients

- A. View service to the family as the primary responsibility, employing professional skill and competence in their behalf.
- B. Assist the family in obtaining the maximum level of functioning.
- C. Engage in activities which enhance client self-determination.
- D. Safeguard the interests and rights of clients, mindful of potential conflicts of interest; do not engage in any activity that violates or diminishes the civil rights of any individual.
- E. Serve as an advocate for families in preventing or eliminating practices that are discriminatory or inhumane toward any person or group of persons'.
- F. Respect the privacy of clients; hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of professional service, sharing that information without consent only for compelling professional or legal reasons.

III. The Perinatal Social Worker's Responsibility to Social Work Colleagues and Other Professionals

- A. Cooperate with other members of the service delivery team to promote the best interests of the family.

- B. Function as a team member, respecting the expertise of each professional on the team.
- C. Hold in confidence information shared by colleagues in the course of professional transactions.
- D. Provide support and aid to colleagues attempting to promote the best interests of the family.

IV. The Perinatal Social Worker's Responsibility to Employing Institutions and Organizations

- A. Adhere to commitments made to an employing organization.
- B. Work to improve those organization policies and procedures which relate to individuals and families.
- C. Utilize standard procedures to promote change in the practices of the employing agency.

V. The Perinatal Social Worker's Responsibility to the Social Work Profession

- A. Strive to enhance the image of the social work profession.
- B. Utilize appropriate procedures to remedy unethical conduct of any member of the profession.
- C. Base practice upon recognized knowledge, keeping abreast of emergent knowledge.
- D. Contribute to the knowledge base and share this knowledge with colleagues.

VI. The Perinatal Social Worker's Responsibility to the Community and Society

- A. Seek to prevent and eliminate discrimination against any person or group on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental/emotional/physical disability and/or any other personal characteristic or status.
- B. Strive to ensure that all persons, regardless of their status, strengths or limitations, have access to available services, opportunities, and

resources.

C. Contribute professional expertise to community activities that foster the integrity of the family unit and the good of parents and their infants.

D. Advocate changes in public policy and legislation which improve social conditions for families; encourage consumer participation in shaping policies which impact upon families.