

CODE OF ETHICS

FOR THE PRACTICE OF MUSIC THERAPY IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

The New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board approves the following Code of Ethics, which is endorsed by Music Therapy New Zealand, as the parent body.

Registered Music Therapists are required to maintain standards of practice and ethics in their practice and to inform and protect those who seek their services. The code shall apply to all Registered Music Therapists recognised as registered by the NZ Music Therapy Registration Board, and is relevant to students undertaking training in music therapy to qualify as a music therapist in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Code of Ethics expresses the core ethical principles and guidelines for the responsible practice of music therapy, in a manner consistent with the NZ Disability Strategy, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the bicultural, multi-ethnic nature of Aotearoa New Zealand society. It also acknowledges the collaborative participation of clients and their whānau in the therapeutic process. It gives due protection to the rights and interests of both clients and Registered Music Therapists. It acknowledges responsibilities to clients, the community, employing bodies, personal practice, and the profession. It provides a framework for addressing ethical issues.

Definitions

NZ Registered Music Therapist: Registered Music Therapists in Aotearoa New Zealand are registered by the NZ Music Therapy Registration Board, hold a current annual practising certificate, have signed and agreed to meet the Standards of Practice for Registered Music Therapists in New Zealand, and adhere to the Code of Ethics for the Practice of Music Therapy in New Zealand.

Client: Throughout this document the term “client” or “client and/or their representative” is used. It is acknowledged that this term has an embedded hierarchy and can be problematic in terms of supporting unequal power-relationships. Some therapists may use and prefer other terms such as “players” “participants”, (in education settings) “students” or “learners”, or (in medical settings only) “patients”. Until another term is agreed on, the term “client” will be used whilst acknowledging its limitations.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

The music therapist shall:

- (a) always act in the best interests of the client to promote wellbeing and protect the client’s legal rights; in particular, the client has the right to information, physical, psychological and cultural safety, dignity, respect, protection, self-advocacy, privacy, confidentiality, and informed decision-making free from coercion;
- (b) work within the scope of practice as defined by the Standards of Practice for New Zealand Registered Music Therapists;
- (c) acknowledge their own cultural identity and be aware of how this may differ from the culture and values of their clients as well as issues of power and privilege;
- (d) establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the client-therapist relationship;
- (e) continually assess, with the client where possible, the appropriateness of the therapeutic aims and/or approach including when and how to bring the work to a close;

- (f) observe all Aotearoa New Zealand legislation relevant to the client and workplace, including but not limited to human rights, the Treaty of Waitangi / Te Tiriti o Waitangi, health and disability, privacy, and health and safety;
- (g) inform the client about music therapy and the role of the Registered Music Therapist, and negotiate/agree the purpose for the individual client;
- (h) take into account client's interests and wellbeing when offering music therapy services, recognising and addressing any conflicts of interest as required
- (i) evaluate together with the client an appropriate time to close therapy.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE COMMUNITY AND EMPLOYERS

The music therapist shall:

- (a) describe their qualifications and services accurately and appropriately in any advertisement or information;
- (b) disclose their registration and current annual practising certificate status with the New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board;
- (c) set fees which are fair and reasonable taking into account such things as maintenance of equipment, preparation time, professional development, supervision, and administration;
- (d) negotiate an appropriate contract with any employer or organisation, which clearly states the respective duties of each party;
- (e) inform an employer or organisation of any factors that may impact on effective service delivery to the client;
- (f) take responsibility for becoming familiar and keeping up to date with standards or legislation relevant to their employer, organisation and/or their practice.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The music therapist shall:

- (a) accept responsibility for maintaining and updating their level of competency as outlined in the Standards of Practice for Music Therapy in New Zealand;
- (b) maintain continuing professional development and supervision as set out in the requirements of the NZ Music Therapy Registration Board for registration and the annual practising certificate;
- (c) take responsibility for practising adequate self-care in order to work safely with a client.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES AND THE PROFESSION

The music therapist shall:

- (a) act with integrity, respect, and fairness towards colleagues, and other professionals;
- (b) conduct inter-collegial relationships in a professional manner;
- (c) value collegiality and sharing of professional resources, knowledge, and research to broaden the skill and knowledge base of the profession;
- (d) not offer services to any client already working with another music therapist without consultation and agreement by both parties.
- (e) work in a collegial relationship to support a particular client when agreed upon by all parties;

- (f) work effectively within a therapeutic team, informing, consulting and collaborating with team members and with family and whānau as appropriate;
- (g) identify any potential personal or professional conflict of interest which may arise in their practice, and disclose any conflict with clients, colleagues, employers or other relevant parties, to ensure that no disadvantage accrues to any party;
- (h) take appropriate action in relation to any colleague's behaviour that could be judged as professional misconduct or unethical, including initial discussion with the colleague if possible; approaching their supervisor or employer if considered necessary; or in serious cases of music therapist misconduct initiating a formal complaints procedure through the NZ Music Therapy Registration Board;
- (i) respect the values and reputation of the New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board and Music Therapy New Zealand and represent them only when authorised to do so.

5. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The music therapist shall:

- (a) obtain informed consent from clients prior to their participation / engagement in / receipt of (any) music therapy (services) ;
- (b) observe the conditions of the Privacy Act (1993), and any revisions to or replacement of this Act and respect the client's right to privacy;
- (c) record information which is relevant only to client care and for which informed consent has been given;
- (d) maintain and dispose of records in a confidential manner, and in accordance with all relevant legislation and organisational policies and procedures;
- (e) obtain informed consent from clients or their representatives before photographing, audio or video recording or documenting information about their clients;
- (f) obtain informed consent from clients when any information is used for teaching, research, publication or publicity; and take all reasonable steps to preserve anonymity, except where clients give consent or request to be named, unless circumstances prevent use of actual names.
- (g) in the therapeutic context, share a client's personal information only when necessary and (other than in exceptional circumstances) with their informed consent, for purposes such as multi-disciplinary collaboration, referral to another professional, or to minimise risk where the client is considered to be dangerous to themselves or others; such information shall be restricted to relevant client material;
- (h) ensure that any students, allied health professionals, volunteers or others observing or participating in a music therapy session are informed of the requirement to preserve the client's privacy and (unless consent otherwise is given) anonymity; and where possible require a signed confidentiality agreement.

6. BREACHES OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

Evidence of any violation of this Code of Ethics should be brought to the attention of the New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board through their formal complaints procedure for consideration and resolution.

7. REVIEW

This Code of Ethics shall be reviewed by the New Zealand Music Therapy Registration Board at five-yearly intervals or before if the need arises.

8. DATE: 8 September 2020. Reviewed by: NZ Music Therapy Registration Board, Music Therapy New Zealand, and Victoria University Master of Music Therapy course director.