

AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE SPECIALISTS

Code of Conduct

1 Preamble

The Code of Conduct¹ of the Australasian Association of Nuclear Medicine Specialists (AANMS) sets out principles to guide nuclear medicine specialists in the provision of quality medical and imaging services to their patients, to guide the conduct of their relationships with patients, colleagues and members of the community and to reinforce the importance of maintaining the integrity and good reputation of the profession of nuclear medicine.

2 Responsibilities of the Nuclear Medicine Specialist

Fellows of the AANMS shall respect their special knowledge and professional skills and shall practise nuclear medicine with a high standard of professional practice and ethical behaviour. Fellows shall deal with patients, staff, colleagues and members of the community fairly and without discrimination. Fellows shall maintain their clinical competence and current knowledge of nuclear medicine.

Fellows shall conduct quality nuclear medicine services and render professional opinions based upon the performance of the appropriate service in combination with clinical assessment of the patient (including correlation with other clinical information and imaging as may be relevant).

Fellows shall provide appropriate personal supervision for all nuclear medicine services and shall provide a report on each service in a timely manner and undertake further investigation or treatment when appropriate. In the case of accredited training sites, a trainee may perform some, or all, of these tasks under the supervision of the nuclear medicine specialist.

Reports should be clear and concise with relevant findings emphasised. Reports should be provided to referring doctors in a timely manner. In the event that urgent, clinically significant, unexpected findings are found, reasonable attempts should be made to undertake prompt and direct communication with the referrer (and/or medical staff currently managing the patient) to allow for timely medical intervention as appropriate.

3 Assuring Quality and Safety

Fellows shall ensure that all diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine services are carried out in a manner that is as safe as possible for patients, staff and members of the public. Fellows shall ensure that any procedure is clinically indicated and that the benefits of the procedure outweigh the risks, if necessary in consultation with the referring medical practitioner. Fellows shall ensure appropriate radiation safety measures and government radiation licensing regulations are adhered to and appropriate quality assurance activities are undertaken. Appropriately trained staff shall be available for the provision of nuclear medicine services. Practices shall be equipped to ensure an appropriate level of safety and quality.

Fellows shall ensure that any adverse event is reported in accordance with the relevant regulatory requirements and disclosed as appropriate to the patient. Adverse events should be investigated and measures should be implemented, as appropriate, to prevent recurrence.

¹ This Code of Conduct is applicable to both Fellows and Members of the AANMS; in this Code of Conduct where the term "Fellow" is used, it also applies to Members. As Nuclear Medicine includes PET, references to Nuclear Medicine procedures also refer to PET.

4 Provision of Information to Patients

Patients shall be informed of the nature, duration and any significant risks of nuclear medicine procedures and appropriate consent obtained.

5 Research

Fellows shall follow ethical principles and standards of medical research, as enunciated by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in Australia and the New Zealand Health Research Council (NZHRC) in New Zealand. Fellows shall particularly be concerned about radiation protection standards in any research in which they are involved.

When an author of a research publication, a Fellow shall have made a significant contribution to the conduct of the research study and must be satisfied that the results are correct and justify the conclusions.

Fellows shall be aware of patients' rights with respect to the collection, use, disclosure and access to personal health information, including disclosure as provided for under the law. Patients' anonymity must be preserved in case presentations and in research, except with their permission.

6 Advocacy for Nuclear Medicine

Fellows shall advocate for the practice of high quality nuclear medicine in accordance with the principles set out in this Code. Fellows shall ensure that any public statements regarding Nuclear Medicine matters reflect current knowledge and considered professional opinion. Individual patients shall not be identified without their permission. Fellows shall not use the mass media for self-promotion.

Ratified April 2019