

# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS

Code of Ethics Working Group

Published 2018.12.02  
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# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

On January 13, 2018, a group of healthcare simulationists from around the world gathered at a summit held in Los Angeles, California to collaborate on a unifying code of ethics for healthcare simulation professionals.

Members of this working group hailed from countries across six continents and brought expertise from a breadth of professions and simulation practices. They represented leadership from a range of simulation organizations and industry partners.

Working together with ethicists and mindful of other codes, the group members formulated a code of ethics relevant across simulationist disciplines. The Healthcare Simulationist Code of Ethics asserts key aspirational values important to the practice of simulation: Integrity, Transparency, Mutual Respect, Professionalism, Accountability, and Results Orientation. The Code identifies values important to the welfare of all parties in the healthcare simulation community of practice, and it asserts our identity and commitment to healthcare simulation as a profession.

The working group offers the Healthcare Simulationist Code of Ethics for adoption and use by professional associations, societies, and institutions, subject to annotations relevant to those groups.

# INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

**Who the Code is For:** The Healthcare Simulationist Code of Ethics is designed to assert aspirational values at the highest, general level for all healthcare simulation professionals.

**Adoption of the Code:** As is typical for codes of ethics, this Code is self-imposed. Therefore, it is the decision of organizations, societies, and institutions to voluntarily adopt and disseminate the code.

**Annotation of the Code:** Organizations and institutions may wish to elaborate on the code as needed. For example, the American Psychiatric Association has adopted the Code of Ethics from the American Medical Association in general, and also further particularized principles of the code for specific concerns relevant to psychiatric care.

**Translations of the Code:** Translations of the Code of Ethics are encouraged to support the global understanding and adoption of the concepts herein. Information on translating the Code of Ethics may be accessed on the website.

**Where to Find the Code:** The Code is available at [ssih.org/Code-of-Ethics](http://ssih.org/Code-of-Ethics).



# CODE OF ETHICS WORKING GROUP

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# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: PREAMBLE

Individuals and organizations engaged in healthcare simulation work toward safe practice, improved performance, and quality of healthcare. This Code of Ethics shall guide and apply to all who practice healthcare simulation.

As simulation professionals, we recognize that the practice of simulation exerts influence across multiple facets of healthcare. In light of this responsibility, we commit ourselves to the following Code of Ethics.

This Healthcare Simulationist Code of Ethics aims to promote, strengthen, and support an ethical culture among all individuals and organizations engaged in healthcare simulation. It underscores the commitment of Healthcare Simulationists to the highest standards of integrity.

This Code of Ethics is intended to ensure that Healthcare Simulationists perform all activities to the highest ethical standards across the globe. It draws on and develops the fundamental values and practices expressed by the United Nations Development Program and other professional associations.



# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## I. Integrity

Healthcare Simulationists shall maintain the highest standards of integrity including honesty, truthfulness, fairness, and judgment in all matters affecting their duties. They shall:

- Respect and cultivate an ethical organizational environment.
- Provide, as appropriate, disclosure of simulation activity design assumptions, limitations, alterations, and problems.
- Be explicit and unequivocal about the applicability of specific simulation activities and methods according to the available evidence.
- Work to eliminate unnecessary harm to humans, animals, and the environment.
- Honor privacy rights of individuals and organizations, and uphold the confidentiality of data and outcomes as appropriate.
- Respect and acknowledge all intellectual and property rights and give due credit where appropriate.



# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## II. Transparency

Healthcare Simulationists shall perform all healthcare simulation activities in a manner that promotes transparency and clarity in the design, communication, and decision-making processes. They shall:

- Adhere to accepted standards in the documentation, analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of simulation activities.
- Disclose any activities that may involve real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Be explicit about the nature and purpose of the simulation activity, including research activities.
- Restrict simulation activities involving deception, ensuring that deception is minimized to the extent possible and does not involve the concealment of risk or intent to harm or punish.



# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## III. Mutual Respect

Healthcare Simulationists shall respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all. They shall practice empathy and compassion to support beneficence and non-maleficence towards all involved in simulation activities. They shall:

- Honor the knowledge, skills, values, and vulnerability of learners and colleagues.
- Listen to others' points of view, seeking to understand them.
- Exhibit humane behavior, honor diversity, and foster inclusion, avoiding prejudicial treatment.
- Maximize safety and minimize physical and psychological risk.





# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## IV. Professionalism

Healthcare Simulationists shall conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the professional standards inherent in healthcare simulation. They shall:

- Demonstrate professional competence and attitudes.
- Exhibit continuous personal and professional development.
- Encourage and develop colleagues and new entrants to the healthcare simulation profession.
- Cultivate opportunities for the advancement of the healthcare simulation profession.



# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## V. Accountability

Healthcare Simulationists shall be accountable for their decisions and actions in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. They shall:

- Continuously seek, reflect on, and incorporate feedback.
- Submit themselves to professional review as required.
- Be role models of ethical behavior.
- Exhibit professional conduct that is a credit to the healthcare simulation community, employer, and self.
- Identify and notify relevant parties of unsafe, unethical, or unprofessional behaviors.
- Design and use simulations in a way that wisely uses available resources.
- Maintain vigilance regarding not only desired outcomes, but also potential unintended consequences of the simulation activity.



# HEALTHCARE SIMULATIONIST CODE OF ETHICS: VALUES

## VI. Results Orientation

Healthcare Simulationists shall serve to support activities that enhance the quality of the profession and healthcare systems. Outcomes are inclusive of all parts of the process of healthcare simulation and are not exclusive to a final product. They shall:

- Assure the reliable and credible use of healthcare simulation, in line with acknowledged standards of practice.
  - Engage in continuous quality improvement.
  - Create and measure impact across the range of achievable outcomes, including the practice of simulation, human performance, systems improvement, and direct patient results.
  - Incorporate and embed the Code of Ethics throughout healthcare simulation and organizational culture.
  - Use the Code of Ethics to inform ethical practices in relevant fields.
  - Advance public knowledge about healthcare simulation by promoting access and sharing knowledge and experience.
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