
SEFH/FEFH's ETHICAL FRAMEWORK







contents

01

PREAMBLE

PAG - 05

02

PURPOSE AND SCOPE
OF APPLICATION

PAG - 07

03

OUR ETHICAL
VALUES

PAG - 09

04

SEFH/FEFH'S
BEST PRACTICES

PAG - 13

05

DISCLOSURES

PAG - 15

06

REFERENCES

PAG - 17

07

ANNEX I. SPANISH
PHARMACEUTICAL
ETHICS CODE

PAG - 19

08

ANNEX II. CONFLICTS
OF INTEREST
AND CONFIDENTIALITY

PAG - 21





PREAMBLE





PREAMBLE

The Spanish Society of Hospital Pharmacists (SEFH) is a not-for-profit private scientific organization dedicated to advancing the state of the art in the field of hospital pharmacy and to improving the health outcomes of patients and society as a whole through a safe and appropriate use of medicines and healthcare products across all environments and areas of activity.

The Spanish Foundation of Hospital Pharmacists (FEFH) is a non-profit organization whose basic remit is to promote and foster scientific, technical and educational activities in the field of hospital pharmacy.

After their long-term adherence to the Spanish Pharmaceutical Ethics Code, which binds all pharmaceutical professionals (1,2), SEFH and FEFH believe it is their responsibility to establish a series of norms aimed at laying down the ethical principles governing access to funding and participation in actions related to the foundational principles of both scientific institutions.

For that reason, SEFH entrusted the development of an ethical framework to its Bioethics and Clinical Ethics Workgroup (ETHOS), which advises SEFH's Governance Board and SEFH members on all ethical aspects related to pharmaceutical professional practice.

Being able to represent its members is SEFH's most valuable asset. The Society accordingly strives to ensure that they practice their profession maintaining the highest standards of excellence. One of the key missions of SEFH and FEFH is to ensure that the work of hospital pharmacists is built on professional excellence, patient-centeredness and collaboration with other healthcare providers (1).

The ethical groundwork of a scientific society or of a corporation cannot hinge merely on the preparation of a code of ethics. It must also be based on a renewed moral culture that encourages the sharing of responsibilities across the organization, particularly at the time of developing and applying accreditation and/or quality assurance systems (3,4).



PURPOSE AND
SCOPE OF APPLICATION



PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

An ethical framework consists of a series of guidelines aimed at regulating the conduct of SEFH/FEFH as scientific institutions. The guidelines are grounded in the ethical values that lie at the heart of SEFH and FEFH, of the Spanish Pharmaceutical Ethics Code and on the pharmaceutical profession's ten-point best practice framework.

The goal is to share the new ethical framework with all SEFH members as well as with patients, sponsors, governments, other scientific societies, and with society as a whole.

The scope of application of the present ethical framework extends to all SEFH members and, particularly, to the society's senior officials, members of SEFH's Governance Board, FEFH's trustees and the technical personnel and the suppliers engaged by SEFH/FEFH. Members of patient associations, public and private administrations and other scientific societies are also among the addressees of our ethical framework. The framework should also be applicable to all activities and forms of access to external funding.

The present report is addressed to all SEFH/FEFH members. All of them shall at all implicitly take the Society's official position and uphold the profession's ethical standards (1).

03

OUR ETHICAL
VALUES



OUR ETHICAL VALUES

SEFH/FEFH's ethical values may subsequently be translated into actions conducive to generating and strengthening trust in our projects, initiatives and practices. Our ethical values are as follows:

DIGNITY

SEFH/FEFH strives to respect and promote human rights without discrimination of any kind based on personal or social condition or circumstance. SEFH/FEFH is committed with protecting all internationally recognized human rights. All individuals with whom we have a professional relationship shall be treated with due respect.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

SEFH/FEFH's mission is to contribute to the development of hospital pharmacy at local and regional level, and collaborate with central and regional authorities to upgrade the country's healthcare system and improve health outcomes with enhanced drug therapies. This shared responsibility involves the ability to satisfy the population's needs and meet the community's expectations and demands with respect to the healthcare system on the basis of justice and solidarity. In the globalization era, this mission transcends our borders (4).

TRUST

SEFH/FEFH must earn the trust of society as a result of providing citizens with a good standard of service and high-quality care, offering ongoing training programs to their members, cooperating with companies in the healthcare sector, and the securing the respect of both scientific associations and social institutions (4).

DIALOGUE

SEFH/FEFH shall demonstrate an open and participative attitude vis-a-vis their members, other health professionals and citizens as a whole, and seek to collaborate with entities, associations and organizations.



HONESTY

SEFH/FEFH's efforts to secure external funding, the allocation of such funds to different programs, as well as all of the consultancy, educational or research activities they may undertake should be carried out with honesty, which requires commitment and expressing such commitment with coherence and candor.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

SEFH/FEFH actively promote equality of opportunities between their members, with no biases arising from age, gender, race and type of work performed.

INDEPENDENCE

SEFH/FEFH shall enjoy unrestricted freedom to express its position regarding healthcare matters based on its profound understanding of the situation of healthcare practice and the extensive research it has promoted into this area. It shall also be autonomous with respect to the management of its resources. The funds received from commercial entities shall in no way dictate the manner in which SEFH/FEFH conduct their activities as this would be tantamount to commodifying the very essence of both institutions.

INTEGRITY

SEFH/FEFH shall strive to ensure coherence between what they say, what they do and what they write and their mission. In cases where the coherence of a certain activity or service may be called into question, SEFH/FEFH shall justify the relevance of such activities or services. As any other scientist, hospital pharmacists must be aware of the fact that the SEFH/FEFH's activities and services should not be at odds with their mission and their values. Scientific integrity requires veracity, rigor and a systematic method. Research projects shall always be conducted with the patients' benefit in mind, with the ultimate goal of reducing their suffering and/or pushing the boundaries of science (5). All research will be based on a rigorous methodology and scientific evidence. The foregoing is equally applicable to the authorship of papers the contents of the research and the order in which authors are listed, which should correspond to their dedication and contribution to the result.



COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW

Apart from their legal duty to comply with the law, SEFH/FEFH must promote initiatives aimed at changing or improving the legal framework in all areas related to their remit.

VERACITY

SEFH/FEFH shall ensure the transparency of their actions regarding the declaration and management of conflicts of interest and authorship mechanisms. The overarching goal shall be to ensure the intelligibility and rigor of healthcare information and to make sure that the information made available to the media is objective and unbiased (4).

04

SEFH & FEFH'S
BEST PRACTICES

05

DISCLOSURES





SEFH & FEFH'S BEST PRACTICES

Raising funds, either through donations or the sponsorship of educational and scientific activities, means establishing reciprocal relationships with for-profit entities. The ethical evaluation of such activities must take into consideration the benefits they entail for the health of individual and society as a whole rather than the potential advantages they may deliver in terms of profitability or competitiveness (9).

1. The raising of funds for programs, activities, training, studies or any other project shall only be authorized when such programs, activities, training and studies correspond to SEFH/FEFH's mission and purpose. No funding shall be accepted that entails a direct or indirect compensation or remuneration. SEFH's standing committee shall carefully analyze each donation or sponsorship proposal ensuring that the goals sought are in line with SEFH/FEFH's ethical values and that there is a genuine and equitable mutual interest.
2. **Transparency** in general and transparency with respect to financial information in particular is essential for trust-building and to fight against corruption and bribery. SEFH/FEFH shall guarantee an efficacious, efficient and effective use of sponsorships, subsidies and contributions granted to fund its activities. Sponsors must obtain itemized information about the different expenses incurred with respect to the sponsored activity. The information will be published in SEFH's transparency portal.
3. Sponsored **marketing** actions shall be identified by expressions such as "sponsored by" or "organized by," maintaining the society's corporate identity. SEFH/FEFH's **corporate reputation** requires respect and appropriate use of the corporate logos and graphic symbols of SEFH/FEFH and of their partners, contractors and other collaborators. SEFH possesses an accreditation, quality endorsement and logo licensing policy.



4. SEFH/FEFH shall not request or accept any funding or sponsorship proposal that associates their name or their logo to a product or service or to a commercial activity intended to promote or advertise medicines and/or healthcare products for personal gain.
5. SEFH/FEFH shall not allow secret sponsorships or anonymous donations.
6. SEFH/FEFH shall have a right to maintain the confidentiality of the contractual conditions that bind them to a sponsor and, at the same time, to protect the confidentiality of personal data from their sponsors.10 Members will for their part be informed about the conclusion of sponsorship agreements and, specifically, about the identity of the sponsor and their line of business. Transparency about all value transfer elements shall be guaranteed at all times.
7. The offer and acceptance of gifts will be limited to objects of a symbolic or negligible value.
8. **Conflicts of interest** in a social or work-related relationship occur in cases where circumstances arise that may distort the relationship's primary object. Sound conflict of interest management requires exclusion of personal gains both for oneself and for family members, friends, partners, colleagues or any related third party. In this respect, fees or other compensations received for teaching, delivery of presentations or the payment for intellectual property rights will not be regarded as personal gain provided that the sum of such fees or compensations falls within the usual range applied by SEFH/FEFH. Any conflicts of interest must be duly documented. Annex II contains a table that may be used to detect potential conflicts of interest and a proposal of how to address them.



DISCLOSURES

The authors have declared to have no conflict of interest with respect to the contents of this document.



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REFERENCES

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ANNEX I.
SPANISH PHARMACEUTICAL
ETHICS CODE



ANNEX I.

SPANISH PHARMACEUTICAL ETHICS CODE

INTRODUCTION

The pharmacist is a healthcare professional who contributes to improving people's health, preventing disease and making good use of medicines.

When practicing their profession, pharmacists should endeavor to pursue excellence in their individual practice. Their goal should be to attain ethical and professional standards that go beyond what is required from them by law.

An ethical code is a dynamic document that evolves with time, apace with changes in society and in the professional circumstances of each historical moment. For that reason, it appears advisable to carry out a review and adaptation of the first edition of the Code of Pharmaceutical Ethics published in 1998.

The current version is the result of a review process undertaken by experts from the fields of hospital pharmacy, ethics, bioethics, communication and the law.

This Code of Ethics expounds the principles and responsibilities of the pharmacist vis-à-vis the patient, other healthcare professionals and society at large.

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PATIENT-RELATED

1. The foremost responsibility of a pharmacist is to ensure the patient's wellbeing by adapting and following-up on their drug therapy with a view to improving or preserving their health and quality of life.
2. The patient has a right to benefit from the services of a pharmacist and their expertise in the realm of drug therapy, in all the different situations where medicines may be involved.
3. The pharmacist shall promote the patient's right to access effective and safe treatments.
4. The pharmacist shall respect the patient's dignity and shall promote the bioethical principle of personal autonomy ensuring that patients are involved in decisions affecting their health.
5. The pharmacist shall establish a personal relationship with the patient that humanizes and facilitates their professional interventions, and strive to build a trust-based relationship even if their beliefs and values are different from their patients'.
6. The pharmacist shall provide truthful and appropriate information to every patient.
7. The pharmacist will be jointly responsible with the patient for correct therapeutic adherence.
8. The pharmacist shall respect the patients' cultural and personal identity provided that it does not interfere with other people's rights or dignity.
9. The pharmacist shall protect the privacy and confidentiality of the patients' data, abiding by the rule of professional secrecy, except in cases provided for by the Law.
10. The pharmacist shall put the patient's benefit before their own personal, professional, economic or commercial interests.

RELATED WITH OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

11. Pharmacists shall keep their professional skills and competencies up-to-date.
12. Pharmacists shall not engage in practices, behaviors or working conditions that may compromise their independence, objectivity or professional judgement.
13. Pharmacists shall collaborate with their colleagues and other health professionals and act with honesty and integrity in all their professional interactions, irrespective of the hierarchical relationship with their interlocutors. They shall also strive to avoid unfair competition.
14. Pharmacists shall respect the authority and actions of their colleagues and of other health professionals, even when the latter's beliefs and values differ from their own, provided that they do not constitute a threat to other people's dignity or essential rights.
15. Pharmacists must, in an objective manner and with due discretion, report to the relevant authorities any infringement of ethical and professional conduct norms that they may have observed in other colleagues or health professionals.
16. Pharmacists must in the practice of their profession contribute to the advancement of science and of the pharmaceutical profession by engaging in research into their discipline, following the established legal and ethical norms.
17. When carrying out teaching activities, pharmacists must ensure that they adhere to the highest academic standards and that they instill into their students the ethical principles inherent in the pharmaceutical profession.

SOCIETY-RELATED

18. Pharmacists shall be responsible for promoting and preserving the health of the population.
19. Pharmacists shall strive to ensure that healthcare resources are distributed equitably following objective and transparent criteria, particularly in the context of budgetary restrictions.
20. Pharmacists shall participate in clinical procedures in order to guarantee that they are performed safely and shall report any problems related to pharmacotherapy, with any corrective action being decided by the entire multidisciplinary care team.
21. Pharmacists shall comply with all legal and regulatory obligations. They will suggest changes to existing laws or regulations when, according to technical or scientific criteria, such changes may be beneficial to patients and to the pharmaceutical profession as a whole.
22. Pharmacists shall be free to exercise their right to conscientious objection. They must always inform the authorities about their wish to claim this right so that the patient can still avail themselves of the pharmaceutical intervention in question.
23. Pharmacists shall refrain from contributing to or participating in professional practices or interventions whereby their knowledge and skills are put at the service of actions that may threaten a person's life, dignity or human rights.
24. Pharmacists shall promote the protection of the environment, advocating for appropriate waste disposal practices and fostering environmental education.



ANNEX II.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
AND CONFIDENTIALITY



ANNEX II.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Part 1: Personal detail

Name and surname:.....

ID#:.....

E-mail:

Part 2: PUBLIC CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The undersigned declares under his/her responsibility that, to the best of his/her knowledge, his/her sole personal and nonpersonal interests (which may benefit the institution he/she am associated to) with respect to the pharmaceutical industry are as follows:

2.1 STAFF MEMBER AT A PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY	Conflict of Interest	At present or last year	Over one but less than five years ago	Over five years ago
	NO			
	YES			

Company: _____

2.2 CONSULTANT	Conflict of Interest	At present or last year	Over one but less than five years ago	Over five years ago
	NO			
	YES			

Company: _____

2.3 I HAVE AN ECONOMIC INTEREST IN A PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY	NO	YES	Please specify

2.4 PATENTS	NO	YES	Company and product name
	I own a patent on a product		

2.5 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	Conflict of Interest	At present or last year	Over one but less than five years ago	Over five years ago
	NO			
	YES			

Company: _____



2.6 COLLABORATOR INVESTIGATOR	Conflict of interest	At present or last year	Over one but less than five years ago	Over five years ago
	NO			
YES				

Company:

2.7 BENEFICIARY OF A SUBSIDY OR SOME OTHER TYPE OF FUNDING	NO	YES	Please specify

In addition to the disclosures made above, I declare under my own responsibility that THERE ARE NO other interests or activities that in my opinion need to be disclosed.

Should there be other interests or activities to be disclosed, please state them below:

.....

Should any additional conflicting interests appear in the future, I shall disclose them without delay by filling out a new conflict of interest statement where such interests are specified.

Part 3: CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

I am aware that I may be invited to, directly or indirectly, participate in certain activities organized by SEFH/FEFH and I undertake:

1. To handle all information and documents under strict confidentiality conditions.
2. Not to disclose or authorize any other person to disclose any information or confidential documents to third parties.
3. Not to use or authorize any other person to use any confidential information or document for purposes other than those related with the activities carried out by SEFH/FEFH.
4. To return all confidential documents and materials as soon as they are no longer required.

This undertaking shall be valid without time limitations but shall not be applicable to documents or information that the undersigned may have had access to before the date stated below, or to information or documents that may be in the public domain through no acts attributable to the undersigned.

Signed:

Date:

.....



SEFH/FEFH's ETHICAL FRAMEWORK



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