



Code of Ethics
Réso-Santé Colombie-Britannique
Sectoral Table on French-language Health Services in British Columbia

Approved, April 2, 2003.

N.B. Where the singular or masculine is used, the plural and feminine are implicit when required by the context.

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the ethical principles that guide the members and employees of RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique, the Sectoral Table on French-language Health Services in British Columbia.

Responsible for the implementation of directions defined by members, these important responsibilities demand conduct of high ethical standards.

The word ‘ethics’ refers to behaviour, human action, decision. It concerns what one must do (duty, values), what goes beyond what is done (morals). It brings us to the question of **a way of being**.

A dictionary search leads to diverse definitions of ‘ethics’ that come down to three types :

- Ethics evoke **thought about human action**. They refer to a **search for what must be done**. They thus include considerations of values, principles, the ends of action, etc.
- Ethics can be defined by their content. In this way, they present **as a doctrine, a system of values, a set of principles and rules that guide action**.
- Ethics, finally, refer to **a concrete choice of a course of action**. They are defined as a decision, or a decision-making process, as an effort towards decision-making and administration.

Far from being in opposition to each other, as it might sometimes be implied, these three types of definitions complete each other and constitute three complementary functions of ethics : we ponder, we synthesize, and act in consequence.

Moreover, this Code of Ethics must be considered within the context of the specific mission of RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique and its general directions.

1 DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE

Whereas the members of the RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique must act in the interests of the organization and the minority francophone population for which it was instituted;

Whereas the exercise of the duties of members must take into account rules of effectiveness, morality, credibility, confidentiality, and legality;

The members of RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique, in the exercise of their duties, commit themselves to :

Focus their decisions and their actions on the needs of minority BC francophone citizens as a whole, with a view to improving access to quality health services while keeping into account the characteristics of each community and the resources at their disposal.

As a result, members commit to respecting each article in this Code of Ethics of RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique.

2 PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

a) Act with objectivity

A member of RésoSanté exercises his duties in a manner free and independent of personal interests, tastes, or preferences or of those he may be representing. He is bound to avoid all forms of discrimination prohibited by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of the Person and to avoid making decisions that exclude or give preference based on race, colour, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except to the extent provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social status, handicap, or use of means to overcome such handicap. .

b) Act with honesty

A member of RésoSanté shall, within the framework of his mandate and duties, act with honesty in the interests of the minority francophone population and RésoSanté.

Thus, this principle requires that persons subject to this Code not be involved in theft, fraud or breach of trust, avoid all forms of corruption or attempts at corruption, and refuse any money or other consideration to exercise their duties or anything that is not within the law.

A member of RésoSanté displays intellectual honesty regarding the mandate with which he has been entrusted and the duties he holds. He therefore must not appropriate or use without right, the intellectual rights of another person or organization. Moreover, he must not accord, solicit, or accept a favour or undue advantage, for himself or for another, nor use goods belonging to RésoSanté or information he possesses for his benefit.

c) Act with discretion and restraint

A member of RésoSanté must keep secret, facts or information of which he has knowledge that are of a confidential nature. He therefore must, particularly with respect to media, adopt an attitude of restraint towards all facts and information that, if divulged, could harm the public interest, the constituted authority, and the smooth running of RésoSanté, and undermine the private life of a citizen

d) Act without partisan politics

A member of RésoSanté avoids all partisan politics in the exercise of his duties.

e) Act with loyalty to the constituted authority.

A member of RésoSanté discharges his duties or his office avoiding any state or behaviour liable to discredit RésoSanté or compromise its smooth running.

f) Act with respect and dignity

A member of RésoSanté, in the exercise of his duties, treats all persons with courtesy and respect. He acts with dignity in the public expression of his opinions.

g) Avoid all conflicts of interest

‘Conflict of interest’ is defined as a situation where a member of RésoSanté has a personal interest such that this interest prevails or risks prevailing over the public interest for which he exercises his duties.

The notion of conflict of interest is a vast theme. In fact, for conflict of interest to exist, it is sufficient that there be a situation of potential conflict, a real possibility that personal interest, whether pecuniary or other, will prevail over public interest. It therefore is not necessary that a member actually profit from his office or his duties to serve his interests or that he contravene the interests of RésoSanté. The risk that this might occur is sufficient to jeopardize the credibility of RésoSanté.

Moreover, a member of RésoSanté shall avoid any situation where there is an appearance of conflict of interest even though there is no real conflict of interest.

Placed in a situation where he believes himself liable to conflict of interest, RésoSanté member must disclose his interest to RésoSanté verbally or in writing and abstain from sitting at RésoSanté and participating in any deliberation or decision when a question pertaining to the venture in which he has an interest is debated. This latter measure foreseen for a member shall not be used for the Coordinator, who must always abstain from conflict. Cette dernière mesure prévue pour un membre ne peut pas être utilisée par le coordonnateur qui doit toujours s'abstenir de tout conflit.

The member shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon him.

The member shall provide against conflicts of interest and avoid placing himself in situation where he cannot objectively exercise his duties.

The member shall not seek, for himself or his circle, personal advantages in the exercise of his duties.

The member recognizes that being a member of RésoSanté provides no power or privilege with respect to a person's right to health or social services.

The member recognizes that being a member of RésoSanté provides no particular power or privilege other than that conferred within the context of a duly convened meeting of RésoSanté or when he is acting within the context of a mandate received from RésoSanté.

The member shall consider each proposal on its merits when taking a position on a question and consequently abstain from participating in any illegitimate process with his Table colleagues or with any other person.

h) Avoid role conflicts

A Table member may be placed in a situation where there is a conflict between his status as a member elected or appointed by a particular group and his role as a member of RésoSanté.

In such a situation, the member shall act first in consideration of the interests of RésoSanté.

i) Meeting rules

The member commits to respecting the rules governing meeting procedures; therefore, he recognizes the authority of the President in all his legitimacy and recognizes equally the sovereignty of RésoSanté.

The member shall respect the rights and privileges of other members.

The member shall respect his colleague's integrity and good faith; in the event that he wishes to express doubt as to a colleague's or another person's integrity and good faith, he shall request an opportunity to do so in-camera.

The member shall, within the context of a meeting, avoid outwardly displaying his position. He shall express his position at the time of discussion and maintain an attitude of respect and dignity in the presence of different publics.

The member has a right to have it noted in the Minutes that he dissents and his reasons for dissent, if desired. By so noting, the member announces that he reserves the possibility of speaking out publicly about a decision.

The member avoids tarnishing, by immoderate remarks, the reputation of RésoSanté and of all persons who work on its behalf.

j) Financial administration rules

In accordance with the fiduciary responsibilities of the parent organization, la Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie-Britannique, the member shall act with diligence, transparency and equity in the administration of public funds. He(she) shall not jeopardize the integrity of programs or the fiscal integrity of RésoSanté.

3 ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE

Any person in whose opinion a member of RésoSanté has contravened the law or this Code of Ethics shall so inform the President of RésoSanté, or, if the President is the member in question, the Secretary of RésoSanté. The President of RésoSanté, or if he is the member in question, the Secretary of RésoSanté will refer to the codes and procedures of the Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie-Britannique to decide on the measures to be taken.