



## AMA Principles of Medical Ethics

*(AMA Code of Medical Ethics, 2008/2009 Edition)*

The medical profession has long subscribed to a body of ethical statements developed primarily for the benefit of the patient. As a member of this profession, a physician must recognize responsibility to patients first and foremost, as well as to society, to other health professionals, and to self. The following Principles adopted by the American Medical Association are not laws, but standards of conduct which define the essentials of honorable behavior for the physician.

- I. A physician shall be dedicated to providing competent medical care, with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights.
- II. A physician shall uphold the standards of professionalism, be honest in all professional interactions, and strive to report physicians deficient in character or competence, or engaging in fraud or deception, to appropriate entities.
- III. A physician shall respect the law and also recognize a responsibility to seek changes in those requirements which are contrary to the best interests of the patient.
- IV. A physician shall respect the rights of patients, colleagues, and other health professionals, and shall safeguard patient confidences and privacy within the constraints of the law.
- V. A physician shall continue to study, apply, and advance scientific knowledge, maintain a commitment to medical education, make relevant information available to patients, colleagues, and the public, obtain consultation, and use the talents of other health professionals when indicated.
- VI. A physician shall, in the provision of appropriate patient care, except in emergencies, be free to choose whom to serve, with whom to associate, and the environment in which to provide medical care.
- VII. A physician shall recognize a responsibility to participate in activities contributing to the improvement of the community and the betterment of public health.
- VIII. A physician shall, while caring for a patient, regard responsibility to the patient as paramount.
- IX. A physician shall support access to medical care for all people.



## UMA Economic Code of Medical Ethics for Utah Physicians

(A-02 / A-83)

The physicians of Utah hold to their work in the practice of medicine and surgery in all of their branches to be that of an ancient and honored profession, the goals of which are to alleviate suffering, to cure sickness and disease insofar as it is humanely possible, and to prolong meaningful life.

We affirm both the right of patients to be free to choose from whom to receive services and the right of physicians to be free to choose whom to serve, with whom to contract, with whom to associate, and the environment in which to provide medical care. A physician's right to contract or not extends to both patients and third party payers alike.

We acknowledge that the cost of medical care recently has risen faster than the general rate inflation and that it is reaching level which society may not be able or willing to afford without the sacrifice of other necessary goods and services. We further acknowledge that, because the practice of medicine and surgery is an art as well as a science, there are neither dogmas nor certain formulae for delivering simultaneously the optimum and most cost effective care in every case. We realize, however, that it now behooves every physician to conduct his or her practice so as to reduce waste and over-utilization. Therefore, in order to deliver the highest quality care and the lowest cost to society, we, the physicians of the Utah Medical Association do hereby affirm the following precepts:

1. We will deliver only indicated medical care. We will neither make referrals, perform tests or diagnostic procedures, perform operations, give medications or prescriptions for medications, nor give opinions to support delivery of such medical care unless it is specifically indicated.
2. We will distinguish clearly between necessary and elective care or procedures and convey such distinction to each patient.
3. We will encourage our patients to receive necessary health care in an economically competitive setting consistent with high quality medical care.
4. We will, after having admitted a patient to a hospital or other health care facility, make every effort to discharge the patient as soon as it is possible to do so, provided the quality of medical care is not compromised. We will encourage administrators of hospitals and other health facilities to be cooperative in this endeavor.
5. In any case where we are not certain as to whether medical care is necessary we will seek advice and/or consultation from peers before delivering said medical care unless the delay of seeking consultation would compromise necessary emergency care.
6. We consider it our duty to society and to other members of the medical profession to point out any physician or other individual or institution which may be, in our opinion, delivering unnecessary medical care.
7. We invite review by our peers of our practices of health care delivery.
8. We will fully discuss with our patients or their legal guardians the expected cost of any procedure, tests, operations, medications, or other aspects of health care insofar as it is possible. We will also fully explain to patients or their legal guardians the known substantial and serious risks of alternative treatments, procedures and therapies before their undertaking insofar as it is possible. We urge all health care providers to do the same. We invite the participation of all patients in the decision-making process of his or her health needs as regards cost of care and the options open to them. We expect the patient to do his or her part in controlling costs by this discussion.
9. We will be fair in our professional charges for our services. We will relate these charges to the community in which we practice and the financial resources available for health care. We will not withhold necessary medical care from the needy regardless of their ability to pay.
10. We will not exploit third-party payors by charging more or performing more services for insured patients than we would for patients who are not insured.