

18 November 2020

Associate Professor Lynley Anderson  
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By email: [lynley.anderson@otago.ac.nz](mailto:lynley.anderson@otago.ac.nz)

### **Updated Code of Professional Conduct for Medical Students at the Universities of Auckland and Otago**

Dear Lynley

Thank you for inviting the New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) to provide feedback on a draft updated Code of Professional Conduct for Medical Students. The NZMA is New Zealand's largest medical organisation, with more than 5,000 members from all areas of medicine. The NZMA aims to provide leadership of the medical profession, and to promote professional unity and values, and the health of all New Zealanders. Our submission has been informed by feedback from our Board and Advisory Councils.

We consider the draft updated student Code to be a well-considered and thorough document that covers off the key domains of professionalism and conduct nicely. We offer the following relatively minor suggestions that we believe would further enhance this document.

We suggest the addition of a specific point about students taking an increasing role in teaching as they progress through their medical school career. This could emphasise the importance of sharing knowledge with others when appropriate, such as with other medical students and/or members of the multidisciplinary team.

We note the draft updated student code cites a number of references including the NZMA Code of Ethics. We believe it would be useful for the code to also cite the WMA Declaration of Geneva,<sup>1</sup> and consider expanding on aspects in this key document such as not using medical knowledge to violate human rights and civil liberties, even under threat. We also suggest citing the resource A guide to social media & medical professionalism: the tips and traps every doctor and medical student should know<sup>2</sup> which has been jointly developed by the NZMA, NZMSA and our Australian counterpart organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> Available from <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-geneva/>

<sup>2</sup> Available from <https://ama.com.au/article/social-media-and-medical-profession>

Finally, while the Code requires students to report matters of serious concern in a timely and professional manner to those with authority to act, there may be value in specifically identifying bullying or harassment as matters of serious concern that should be reported.

We hope our feedback is helpful and look forward to seeing the finalised code.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Baddock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Dr Kate Baddock  
NZMA Chair