



World Federation of Music Therapy
Federación Mundial de Musicoterapia

World Federation of Music Therapy Code of Ethics

Need & Rationale/ Background

In the WFMT 2020-2023 Council term, the Research & Ethics Commission was tasked with writing a Code of Ethics for the WFMT. While many WFMT individual and organizational members belong to a music therapy organization in their country or region in the world, there are members who do not have an organization to look towards for guidelines on ethical conduct. Further, given the expanding role of this commission to raise awareness of research in music therapy it is imperative the WFMT has a code of ethics given they also publish a peer reviewed journal and host a triennial World Congress of Music Therapy.

Purpose

This Code of Ethics serves to promote ethical practice and to guide music therapists, music therapy educators, supervisors, researchers, and students in their professional interactions and when presenting music therapy to the public. Members of the WFMT commit themselves to respecting this Code of Ethics in consideration of the core values and principles outlined below. The WFMT encourages members to engage with this code of ethics with deference and reverence to their local code of ethics and culture. The issues in this code are not meant to be exhaustive but are offered as a means of supportive guidance.

Core Values & Principles of Ethical Practice

Confidentiality and Privacy

The information shared between a Client/Consumer/Service User/Recipient and music therapist is to be treated confidentially, unless there is concern that the client will harm themselves or others.

Accountability

Music therapists are accountable to the following depending on where they work and perform their jobs.

- Client/Consumer/Service User/Recipient
- Substitute decision makers (Power of Attorney)
- Students / Supervisees if teaching
- Fellow Researchers

- Music therapy Colleagues
- Organization where they are employed
- Regulating Body, Certification Board, College, Government etc.

Integrity

Music therapists are honest and sincere in all relationships and demonstrate honesty and follow-through when facing ethical decisions.

Respect

Music therapists show respect for the dignity and integrity of all human beings and their autonomy and personal decisions in therapeutic training, practice, and research contexts.

Professional Commitment

Music therapists strive for mutually supportive working relationships with colleagues, students, supervisees, organizations and with all whom they interact. They act in compliance with professional standards and applicable laws and regulations, (for example, in the different contexts of clinical, educational, supervision, and research settings), and strive to continue to develop music therapy skills and competencies on an ongoing basis.

Justice

Clients/Consumer/Service User/Recipients have fair and equal rights of access to music therapy services, without fear of discrimination.

Minimizing Harm

Benefits of the treatment/research must outweigh any potential harm.

Music therapists act with integrity, justice, and beneficence, demonstrating concern and moral imperative to do right. Further, they engage in professional development to maintain best practices. This includes developing self-awareness to understand and balance power in order to prevent harm.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Music therapists demonstrate an ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, alongside a continual process of reflexivity, and an awareness of one's intersectionality. Music therapists seek to identify the advantages and barriers that individuals and groups of people experience, and to increase opportunities for them to contribute, develop, and flourish. Music therapists commit to think, act, and make decisions from an anti-oppressive stance

Ethics in Contexts

Ethics in Research

Any music therapy research that involves human participants or human biological materials, will maintain the legal framework of the research, and obtain approval from the institutions/ethics committees and relevant authorities in the countries involved. Conflicts of interest are to be disclosed, and intellectual property is to be respected. The contribution of collaborators shall be clearly acknowledged in any presentation or publication.

Ethics in Social Media

Social media, internet presence, applications and forms of electronic communication are utilized for a variety of reasons such as: professional advocacy, public business promotion, recruiting research participants, and sharing client information with other healthcare providers. Inappropriate use of these forms of communication may lead to compromised confidentiality, multiple relationships, or misinterpretation and misrepresentation of an individual, community or the profession. The WFMT urges its members to exercise good judgment through integrity, honesty, respect, and accountability. Written consent enables therapists to post client content; however, clients hold the right to control their own material posted on social media. Professional judgment should be used when posting comments, videos, posts, or replies on any form of social media.

Ethical Responsibilities to Wider Community

Music therapists strive for accuracy in statements about music therapy, evidence-based practices, and the music therapy profession. They work towards equitable access to services to meet the needs of all individuals who would benefit from music therapy, regardless of financial constraints. Music therapists act with care for the environment through responsible resource management.

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Initial Draft Reviewed by WFMT Council: April 28, 2022

Final Version Approved: September 5, 2022