

NBAD Code of Ethics

Interpretive Guide

The aim of this Interpretive Guide is to provide context, understanding, and examples to what can often be considered abstract concepts within the Code of Ethics. This guide is not exhaustive and is meant to be used in conjunction with Standards, Policies, Guidelines, Position Statements, and Q&A available on the [NBAD website](#), as well as workplace policies/resources/requirements. Please reach out to registrar@adnb-nbad.com if you have an ethics-related question or comments on this Interpretive Guide.

This Interpretive Guide is a living document that will be updated as NBAD resources are developed and revised. Unless otherwise specified, practice resources can be found here: <https://www.adnb-nbad.com/position-statements-and-guidelines/>

This guide is for use alongside the Ethical Decision-Making Framework (see Code of Ethics, page 9).

Acknowledgment

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Standard 1: Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients

1. Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
a. Maintain objectivity when exercising professional judgement.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Do I have any internal biases? Do I recognize my own implicit and unconscious biases? Have I made any pre-judgements about the situation? Am I being Anti-Racist? Equitable, Inclusive?
b. Present information in a way that is easy to understand and is adapted to the client's context.	4.2	Have I tailored my information to meet my client's needs? Is my information inclusive, specific to my client? Can my client and I communicate using language that is clear to both parties? Is existing or past trauma a factor? Do I have any internal biases? Do I recognize my own implicit and unconscious biases?
c. Obtain informed consent from a client for services, including any changes, refusal and/or withdrawal of services.	4.1	Did I get consent? From the appropriate individual? Have I included consent for virtual and/or artificial intelligence platform use?
i. Take all reasonable steps to ensure client consent is not given under conditions of intimidation or undue pressure.	4.3	Do I know that my client is capable of giving consent? If not, what are other options?
ii. If a client lacks capacity,	It was not included. This is newly	

1. Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
obtain consent for planned services from a substitute decision maker. iii. Encourage the substitute decision-maker to honour the client's previously expressed wishes, or when unknown, act in the client's best interest	added. 4.4	Do I understand the difference between consent and implied consent? Do I understand the difference between consent and cooperation? When do I need to renew consent? Do I know how to find provincial laws that speak to consent? When might I not need consent? There may be circumstances where a dietitian may be obligated to disclose aspects of the client's personal information without expressed consent. Examples might include imminent danger to client or others.
d. Respect the client's right to refuse treatment and/or obtain a second opinion.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Am I able to, and should I offer my client the choice to see another dietitian? (Consider Conflict of Interest, language barrier, location barrier, etc). Have I documented my client's choice to decline recommended nutrition care plans (ex. Texture modified diet for dysphagia), so the rest of the team is aware?
e. Discuss choices and support clients to make decisions for services.	1.11 and 6.2	Am I being asked to provide services that are within my scope, or are they best suited to another health care professional? If my client chooses a product or service for treatment that is

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		not one I recommended, am I able to continue to work with my client in their best interest? Am I supporting client-led care and services, respecting the client's decision-making as the expert in their own culture, perspective, and lived experience and recognition that different cultures have different understandings of health, autonomy, privacy, confidentiality, relationships, and varied approaches to decision- making?
f. Uphold human autonomy when using technology, including Artificial intelligence (AI) tools, ensuring individuals retain decision-making authority, especially regarding person-centred outcomes. When using AI in healthcare, integrate it responsibly and ethically, improving dietetic services with professionalism and compassion.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Am I respecting the individual's right to make their own decisions, even when AI or other technology is involved? Have I conducted a comprehensive literature review and evaluated the evidence? Could the AI recommendation negatively affect the individual, and have I critically assessed its accuracy and appropriateness? Am I using AI because it genuinely improves the quality, safety, or accessibility of care, rather than simply because it is convenient? Do I understand the difference between "evidence-based" and "evidence-informed"? Do I recognize the benefits and limitations of using technology (e.g., AI tools) in the nutrition

1. Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
		care process?
g. Use an evidence-based and evidence-informed approach to meet client needs.	1.11, 5.4, 6.1 and 2.1	Have I completed a comprehensive literature search and evidence appraisal? What does the literature say? Does the nutrition care approach align with the client's goals and wishes? I understand the difference between evidence-based and evidence-informed? Do I recognize the advantages and limitations of technology use (for example, Artificial Intelligence tools) when it comes evidence-based information.
h. Respect and maintain client privacy and confidentiality. i. Refer to New Brunswick Association of Dietitians Standards of Practice. ii. In compliance with applicable legislation, implement measures that protect personal health information, ensuring these protections when utilizing AI, social media, and virtual care tools. iii. Confidential client information should only be disclosed: • with client consent, • when the failure to disclose confidential information would cause imminent and significant harm to the health or safety of any person or	3.1 It was not included. This is newly added. 3.2	Do I understand how to restrict my privacy on social media platforms? Have I applied the strictest privacy settings possible on my social media? Have I discussed or published any information publicly that could identify my client(s)? Have I discussed consent for platform use as well as consent for nutrition care? Have I considered the limitations on private content I can share even with client consent? Do I know where to find information on the requirement for health care professionals to

1. Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
others, or • in accordance with law.		obtain consent?
i. Advocate for clients, families, and other caregivers when appropriate. i. Provide client-centred care that recognizes cultural safety and humility, respects diversity and is fair and inclusive. ii. Explore solutions and use all reasonable resources to supply quality services which meet the needs of both client and employer.	It was not included. This is newly added. 3.3 1.2	If I am not able to keep my client on my roster, is it for a reason that doesn't violate the Human Rights Code? Am I being equitable in my decision over which clients I take on, and in the care they receive? Do I have the knowledge and understanding of my client's culturally appropriate foods/diet? Do I have access to culturally diverse resources that inform my assessment and nutrition care plan? Am I able to help marginalized people? (ex., poverty, food insecure, lack of consistent housing).
j. Supply services until care is no longer needed, the client requests discontinuation, or care is transferred to another dietitian or another health professional.	2.3 and 4.2	Am I at risk of prolonging the therapeutic relationship, or providing nutrition care, for longer than is required? Have I communicated clearly with the client?
k. Be sensitive to your position of power as a dietitian.	6.1	If I am a private practitioner, have I considered developing a Code of Conduct or Social Media Policy for my online platform use? Am I maintaining clear boundaries in my therapeutic relationships? Have I communicated these boundaries with clients?

1. Provide Services in the Best Interest of Clients	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
		Do I understand that I may be seen as in a position of power over clients?

Standard 2: Communicate Effectively

2. Communicate Effectively	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
a. Communicate in a civil, respectful, and truthful manner.	2.1, 3.1 and 5.2	Am I using respectful and appropriate language in my interactions? Can any of my communications be misconstrued as harassment? Are all forms of communication (spoken, written, social media posts) consistent with each other and using appropriate and accepted language?
b. When using AI tools such as Chatbots and virtual assistants, apply professional judgment to review AI output. Ensure data input and information generated is consistent with obligations related to privacy, equity, diversity and inclusion and ensure that the information provided is both accurate and reflects current and up to date dietetic practice.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Have I used my professional knowledge and judgment to critically review the AI-generated information? Would I be comfortable explaining and defending the information I obtained from AI to a client, colleague, or regulatory body? Could the AI have generated misinformation, outdated recommendations, or fabricated references? Could the information I enter allow a client to be identified? Does the information account for differences in socioeconomic circumstances, food access, disability, language, gender, culture, and other relevant factors?
c. Adhere to the Dietitians Act, NBAD Regulations, By-Laws, standards and policies and	1.8 and 2.5	Am I familiar with the Dietitians Act and the NBAD Regulations, By-Laws, standards, and policies

2. Communicate Effectively	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
requirements under applicable Acts, regulations and by-laws regarding client records, advertising and media.		that apply to my practice? Am I consistently following the legislation, regulations, professional standards, policies, and other requirements that govern my practice, particularly regarding client records, advertising, media, confidentiality, and professional conduct? Do I know where to find the most current legislation, regulations, standards, and policies when I need to verify a requirement?
d. Do not make false, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, or derogatory statements or claims.	2.5 and 5.3	Are my verbal and written interactions truthful and accurate? Do I know the full and truthful details of the scenario? Do I have any biases?
e. Do not verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually harass in any communication.	1.5 and 5.2	Am I using respectful and professional language in my interactions? Can any of my communications be misconstrued as harassment? Do I understand what harassment means? Can my actions be perceived as harassment? Are all forms of communication (spoken, written, social media posts) consistent with each other and using appropriate and accepted language?

2. Communicate Effectively	<u>Comparison to NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
f. Manage interpersonal conflict appropriately.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Can I disagree with a client? With a colleague? In a public forum? What are the potential risks to my client? To me? Or to the reputation of my profession? Am I acting and being professional in these scenarios? Or am I allowing my personal feelings to speak for me?

Standard 3: Collaborate Effectively

3. Collaborate Effectively	<u>Comparison to NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
a. Collaborate with clients, interprofessional colleagues, workplace leaders, relevant partners (including spiritual leaders and Elders) and a client's family, caregiver, guardian, or substitute decision-maker to provide quality services.	8.3	What are my client's goals and have I considered them in the development of my nutrition care plan? Who are the members of the care team? (Caregivers, family, hired support, Substitute Decision Maker, etc.) Have I communicated effectively to the correct individual? Have I taken their feedback into consideration?

3. Collaborate Effectively	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
b. Recognize and respect other health professionals' scope of practice.	2.3	Where does my role overlap with the roles of my colleagues? Have we discussed this overlap as a team? Am I clear on my own scope of practice?
c. Collaborate with others in the development and revision of policies to support ethical and quality healthcare services and implement and monitor the impact of these initiatives.	1.2	Have I considered the policies and guidelines I need in my practice to provide ethical, competent care? Is there a committee or working group that would be beneficial to be a part of?
d. Support learning within the profession when there are opportunities to teach students, interns and mentor colleagues.	7.1, 7.2 and 8.1	Do I know what is expected of me when I am supervising a dietetic student? Do I know what is expected of me when I am mentoring a colleague who needs to provide nutrition support. Do I know what is expected of me when I am requested to be a supervisor for a dietitian (candidate) after a Fail result of their first CDRE attempt? Do I know what is expected of me if I fail the CDRE?

Standard 4: Practice Safely and Competently

4. Practice Safely and Competently	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
a. Recognize and practice within the limits of individual competence and dietetic scope of practice. i. Act as a credible and reliable source of evidence-based food and nutrition information. ii. Provide safe, client-centered services using knowledge, skills, judgement and professional attitude. iii. Refer to other members of interprofessional team if needed service is beyond the dietitian's skill, knowledge, and legal scope of practice.	2.3 2.1 and 6.1 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 6.1 2.3	Is this within NBAD scope of practice? Is this within my workplace scope of practice? Is this within my personal scope of practice? With whom can I consult or discuss my client's needs? Am I able to refer to another dietitian or other healthcare professional if I cannot provide care? Am I focused on the best interest of the client? What expectations do the clients have? Can I support the client's choice? Do I have any conflicts of interest, perceived or actual, that need to be disclosed, or else requiring me to recuse myself?
b. Reflect on current practice to determine knowledge, skills, and ability development needed to ensure safe, competent, and ethical practice. Stay up to date on best practices, including AI ethics and technology change, for	2.2	What are my goals for this CCP cycle? Where are the gaps in my knowledge? Do I know what is required of me to fill those gaps?

4. Practice Safely and Competently	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
continued competence, quality assurance, quality improvement, and professional growth.		Have I reflected on my practice to determine my learning needs?
c. Uphold professional boundaries. i. Abstain from personal relationships with clients, including sexual relationships and conduct that could be perceived as sexual. ii. Where possible, refer client(s) to another dietitian when a relationship exists or could be perceived to exist that would compromise a dietitian's objective decisions and actions toward that client(s). iii. If professional boundaries cannot be kept due to geographical, workforce, and/or resource limitations: • Identify, disclose, document, and mitigate risks of boundary crossings; and • Re-establish boundaries as soon as reasonably possible. iv. Balance the ability to remain objective with compassion regarding issues of sensitivity and/or personal trauma that arise during treatment.	5.2 1.5 and 5.2 It was not included. This is newly added. It was not included. This is newly added. It was not included. This is newly added.	Am I appropriately maintaining a therapeutic relationship with clients? How do I set clear professional boundaries? What should I do if I have blurred the boundary between personal and professional relationship? Am I using trauma sensitive language? Do I know when to discontinue a professional therapeutic relationship with the client due to conflict of interest or other reasons?

4. Practice Safely and Competently	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics (version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
d. Be risk aware. Identify any potential type of harm, mitigate the risk of harm, and apply preventative measures when practicing dietetics.	1.11	Is there risk related to my personal scope? Is the risk to me, or is it to my client? What type of harm can be caused? How can I protect the client and myself? What is the likelihood of risk (rare, unlikely, possible, almost certain)? What is the frequency of the risk (almost never, sometimes, every day, monthly, always)? What is the impact or severity of harm (low, moderate, high, extreme)? What is the duration of harm (one- time, short, long, or indefinite period)? Is the risk perceived (irrational or emotional, potentially linked to trauma) or rational (material)?
e. Recognize and engage in trauma-informed practice.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Am I using trauma-informed language? Am I aware of the client's triggers and have had the appropriate discussion about the matter?

Standard 5: Be Honest and Responsible

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
a. Do not act in a way that negatively affects the reputation of the profession.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Would I consider my behaviour professional if it were observed by a client, colleague, or member of the public? Could my comments, posts, or interactions be considered disrespectful, discriminatory, offensive, or unprofessional? Am I making claims about my services or expertise that could mislead the public?
b. Recognize and resolve ethical situations by applying critical thinking skills in problem solving and decision making (consult the Ethical Decision-Making Framework, page 9). i. Identify and address conflict of interest. Disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest that arise in professional roles and relationships and resolve them in the interest of the needs and concerns of the client. ii. Refrain from accepting gifts or services, which may influence or give the appearance of influencing professional judgement.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Have I considered all ethical perspectives regarding a matter? Have I identified the basic nature of the problem: What is the issue? Have I gathered information about the problem or issue: facts, order of events? What information is missing? Where can I find it? Have I considered what are the applicable laws or policies? Do I know who is involved? What do they report? Do I know what options I have for resolution? Pros and cons? Which option causes the least harm or stress to my client?

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
		Am I able to explain my rationale for choosing the action I undertook? Was the outcome expected? Was it handled in the best way possible? What would I do differently next time?
c. Assume responsibility for services provided by those under your supervision.	7.2	Do I supervise dietetic students? Do I have mentorship agreements with the dietitians (candidate) under my supervision? Do I have supervision agreements for any dietitian (candidate) who has not successfully passed the CDRE? Have I engaged with those under my supervision when necessary? Am I adequately fulfilling my supervisory and/or mentorship responsibilities? What are my legal boundaries as a supervisor for a dietitian (candidate) or dietetic intern?
d. Maintain transparent, accurate, and truthful financial records. i. Inform clients of all fees and methods of payment prior to delivering services.	2.5 1.4	Is my fee structure and cancellation policy clearly available on all my platforms (website, social media, print marketing)?

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
ii. Allow your name and registration number to be used for the purpose of verifying professional dietetic services rendered only if you provided or supervised the provision of those services. iii. Bill clients accurately and in a manner that reflects the services delivered. Maintain financial records whenever billing occurs in dietetic practice.	2.6 1.3	Am I upholding tax requirements as per Canada Revenue Agency standards? Are my fees fair? Are my billing practices ethical and truthful?
e. Be accountable for your actions when practicing dietetics. i. Disclose to the client for any error which causes or has potential to cause harm or distress to a client. ii. Propose solutions, alternatives, or referral, as appropriate. iii. Maintain fitness to practise and withdraw from practice when circumstances arise that may impair reasonable skill or judgment or may endanger the health or safety of clients.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Do I have internal biases? Am I aware of the types of situations or circumstances that would prevent me from providing safe and effective care? Do I offer referrals to other dietitians or health practitioners when a request for care is outside of my individual or professional scope? Do I avoid boundary crossing when presented? Do I have a condition that may impair my professional abilities?
f. Do not discriminate on the basis of a person's age, body size/weight, race, colour, religion, creed, sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability or mental disability, origin, family status, marital status, political belief or affiliation, source of income, or any other protected ground within the New Brunswick <i>Human Rights Act</i>.	1.6 and 3.3	If I refused care, is it for a valid reason? Did I document the details of care refusal? Do I review the necessary resources to ensure my decisions are ethical?

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
g. Do not enter into agreements, assignments, or contracts that require you to breach the New Brunswick Association of Dietitians Code of Ethics or Standards of Practice.	1.9	What are my professional boundaries? Does my practice align with my professional and personal values?
h. Fulfil reporting obligations. i. Report to the appropriate supervisor and/or NBAD Registrar if you have reasonable grounds to believe that another registrant: • has engaged in professional misconduct, incompetence or conduct unbecoming the profession, • is incapacitated, or • is practising in a manner that otherwise constitutes a danger to the public. ii. Report to the appropriate supervisor and/or regulator of another health profession if you have reasonable grounds to believe that a member of that health profession: • has engaged in professional misconduct, incompetence or conduct unbecoming the profession, • is incapacitated, or • is practising in a manner that otherwise constitutes a danger to the public. iii. Report incidents as per employer policy.	It was not included. This is newly added. 5.1 5.1 It was not included. This is newly added.	Could this behaviour constitute misconduct, incompetence, incapacity, or a danger to the public? What are my professional responsibilities and obligations if the person involved is a colleague, supervisor, or someone from another health profession? Who is the appropriate person to report this to—my supervisor, NBAD Registrar, or another regulator? What does my employer's policy require me to report, and how should I report it? What could happen if I do not report the concern?

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
i. Cooperate with any regulatory body, any committee of a regulatory body with respect to any regulatory process or requirements under applicable Acts, regulations and by-laws.	It was not included. This is newly added.	If contacted by a regulatory body or committee, do I respond promptly, honestly, and transparently, providing all requested information without defensiveness? Am I fully cooperative with quality assurance programs or practice audits, viewing them as constructive tools rather than burdens? Do I view regulations as a minimum baseline for public safety, or am I striving to exceed these standards in my daily client care? Do I respect the confidentiality and legal boundaries required during any ongoing regulatory investigation or process while still fulfilling my duty to cooperate?
j. Present your professional qualifications and credentials accurately.	1.12	Have I clearly identified myself to my clients and colleagues, including any limitations on practice I may have?
k. Maintain integrity in all professional interactions.	It was not included. This is newly added.	Do I maintain professional integrity by putting the client's well-being first, being completely transparent about conflicts of interest and evidence-based recommendations, and taking personal responsibility for my scope of practice and mistakes? Do you hold yourself

5. Honest and Responsible	Comparison to <u>NBAD Code of Ethics</u> <u>(version 2007)</u>	Questions to ask yourself
		accountable to the highest standards of honesty and trust in every professional interaction?