

# *Home & Health Care Association of Massachusetts, Inc.*

## *Code of Business Ethics*

*The Home & Health Care Association of Massachusetts exists to support and empower our members so as to advance in-home care as the therapeutic, compassionate, and client-preferred care choice of the future. With this in mind, the Board of Directors has adopted this Code of Business Ethics as a statement to the public and to governmental agencies that the Association and its member agencies stand for integrity and strive to maintain the highest ethical standards. Compliance with the principles set forth in this code is a condition of Agency membership in the Association.*

### **Client/Patient Rights**

1. Each client/patient is treated with courtesy and respect. Clients have the right to be informed concerning their care, and to participate in planning and approving the care they receive. Clients' wishes and preferences are honored whenever possible.
2. Client privacy is carefully guarded. Personal information is used only as needed for care planning and provision, insurance eligibility, billing, and necessary business operations. Personal information is never shared with unauthorized individuals or discussed in public.
3. Oral and written statements to clients and to the public honestly and accurately represent services, benefits, costs, and provider capability.
4. The agency has a procedure to accept, investigate, and respond to client complaints. Clients can file complaints without fear of retaliation.
5. The agency does not solicit or permit an employee to solicit clients for its services through coercion or harassment.
6. The agency makes reasonable efforts to ensure that clients have their on-going home care needs addressed and, whenever reasonably possible, gives advance notice before discontinuing services.

### **Quality Standards**

1. The agency ensures that all caregiving staff are properly qualified, adequately trained, and periodically supervised to meet the needs of the clients they serve. The agency ensures that employees get continuing education and in-service training to update their knowledge and skills.
2. The agency conducts a criminal background check and checks references for all caregiving staff before they are assigned to provide care.
3. The agency develops a written plan of care, service plan, or care plan for each of its clients, and gives a copy of that plan to the client. Services comply with accepted standards of quality and professional practice.
4. The agency performs periodic supervisory visits for each of its clients to ensure that care is being provided consistent with the written plan of care, and that it is updated as necessary.
5. The agency has procedures to provide on-call or back-up staff to fill in for caregiving staff in case of illness or emergencies.
6. The agency has a written procedure in place to respond swiftly and compassionately whenever client abuse, neglect, or theft is suspected or alleged.

### **Business Practices**

1. The agency conducts business in accordance with fair business practices and complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including wage and hour, workers compensation, and anti-discrimination laws.
2. The agency directly employs not less than 90% of all caregiving staff, or contracts with other agencies that directly employ their workers. Caregiving staff are not treated as independent contractors.
3. The agency maintains comprehensive general liability insurance covering its employees while they are providing services to its clients.
4. The amount billed or paid for goods and services is commensurate with the amount and type of goods and services provided. The agency does not engage in fraud, or pay or receive kick-backs in exchange for referrals.
5. The agency maintains records of all care and services provided and the client's response to the care and service.

*Approved by the Board of Directors April 13, 2005.*