

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE BRAZILIAN SOCIETY OF RHEUMATOLOGY

PREAMBLE

The Code of Ethics of the Brazilian Society of Rheumatology (SBR, for its initials in Portuguese) applies to all its members, regardless of the member category, and regulates the institutional relationship of the SBR with the other entities, whether public or private.

This code follows and emphasizes the norms in force in the Code of Ethics of the Federal Council of Medicine and contemplates the ethical guidelines of specific interest to the SBR and its members.

The ethical principles established in this code are intended to ensure the mission, vision and values of the SBR, according to its Statutes and Bylaws, and are defined as follows:

MISSION

Promote the excellence of Rheumatology, provide accessible and reliable solutions to gather experts, and develop scientific updates, teaching and research, contributing to the formulation of effective and sustainable public policies, based on ethics and the improvement of clinical practice.

VISION

To be a medical society recognized for its excellence in management practices, in the promotion of events and in scientific production, and in the incentive to better quality and safety practices in patient care and for its integrated and satisfied members.

VALUES

Ethics and respect for life, frequent scientific updates, transparency, organization, sustainable results, appreciation of the members and societal unity.

The SBR and all its members must respect Brazilian ethical standards regarding professional practice and research with human beings, in addition to knowing and applying the current and universally accepted bioethical standards.

Failure to comply with the aforementioned provisions will be subject to administrative sanctions.

This Code of Ethics should be reviewed periodically.

I - RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

II Member Rights:

Art. 1 - It is the member's right to participate in SBR activities, within the scope of his/her member status, without being discriminated against for reasons of religion, ethnicity, sex, nationality, color, sexual orientation, age, social status, and political opinion or of any other nature; the member must also respect and observe the Statutes and the Bylaws of the SBR and this Code of Ethics.

Art. 2 - Indicate flaws in norms, contracts and practices of the Executive Board and the Coordinators of the SBR Committees.

Art. 3 - Provide, by the effective member, public reparation to the SBR when negatively affected in the exercise of his/her profession.

I. II Member Duties:

Art. 4 - Members of the SBR shall not express opinions on behalf of the institution, except upon specific and express authorization of its Executive Board, with the consent of its President, for this purpose.

Art. 5 - The name, trademarks and symbols of the SBR should not be used by the members without the express authorization of the institution.

Art. 6 - The members of the SBR shall not use their influence on the institution to obtain advantages for their own benefit or the benefit of others.

II - RELATIONSHIP WITH PATIENTS

Art. 7 - Members of the SBR should provide patients with all necessary information about their clinical condition, treatment or intervention, and their autonomy should be respected, ensuring the right to decide together with their doctor the best approach to be taken.

Art. 8 - Members of the SBR should respect patients, without regard to color, race, religion, gender, social status, sexual orientation or any other form of discrimination provided for by law.

Art. 9 - Members of the SBR must continuously improve their knowledge and apply the best scientific advancements for the benefit of their patients, maintaining their commitment to continuing medical education.

Art. 10 - Members of the SBR should respect the rights of their patients, protect their privacy and maintain doctor-patient confidentiality, including in public outreach initiatives. Information about patient health may be disclosed with the express authorization of patients or their legal guardian.

Art. 11 - Members of the SBR responsible for activity related to research, clinical trials and clinical records must follow all current ethical and bioethical precepts.

Art. 12 - The relationship of the members, as well as of the SBR, with patient support groups should be independent, respecting the same individual and institutional precepts of privacy, confidentiality and ethics.

III - INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

Art. 13 - In the scope of their institutional relations, all acts of advertising of the SBR, by any means of communication, should be characterized by independence, objectivity, veracity, accuracy, transparency, relevance and technical grounds.

Art. 14 - The SBR shall provide public information and clarification, whenever necessary, aiming to contribute to the population's health education and to aid decision-making by health service managers.

Art. 15 - The President and the Executive Board of the SBR, whenever requested, should provide clarification to their effective members about the decisions made in running the institution.

Art. 16 - The SBR shall not endorse or approve products or trademarks of third parties nor act in a way to impute or transfer its credibility, directly or indirectly, to companies or organizations operating in the market.

Art. 17 - The President, the President-Elect and the Executive Board members, as well as all members of the SBR, will be prevented from providing, directly or indirectly, products or paid services to the SBR. Exceptionally, upon a well-founded justification, the General Assembly may authorize the hiring of effective members with high qualification for the provision of technical-scientific services.

Art. 18 - The SBR and its members shall report to the authorities and competent supervisory bodies any irregular acts or situations that represent a risk to the physical, psychological and social health of the patient or the community.

Art. 19 - The SBR and its members will not be exempted from offering clear, objective and technically grounded opinions on any acts of the government, including normative and infra-legal rules related to Rheumatology.

IV - RELATIONS WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Art. 20 - Members of the SBR, when contacting with professionals from other areas, should not use private titles or logos of the entity, even if it is for the benefit of the Society, without prior authorization from the SBR.

Art. 21 - In interprofessional relationships, members of the SBR shall act with fairness, respect and consideration to other professionals, within the limits of independence of each one, in accordance with the principles of honesty and transparency determined by the Code of Ethics of the SBR.

Art. 22 - It is the duty of all members of the SBR to report to the competent authorities any ethical violation or violation of the laws in force in the country, committed by any medical professional or professional of another area of activity, especially if there is risk to the well-being of patients under their care.

Art. 23 - It is the duty of all members of the SBR to collaborate with any inquiries or legal investigations in cases of inadequate professional conduct that may violate human rights or endanger the health of patients.

Art. 24 - Members of the SBR should not act contrarily to legitimate movements of the medical field, with the purpose of obtaining personal advantages.

V - ROLE AS AN EXPERT

Art. 25 - Members of the SBR, as experts, should respect the basic principles that govern the norms and resolutions of medical expertise, availing themselves of all the means necessary for expert conclusions and respecting the truth of the facts, without distorting them in favor of one of the parties involved in the litigation.

Art. 26 - The SBR recommends that only physicians with specialist titles act as experts, in Rheumatology, in the administrative or judicial domain, issuing opinions based on updated scientific evidence and guidelines.

Art. 27 - All members of the SBR, when vested the function of medical expert or auditor, appointed by an institution or competent authority, must act ethically and impartially, free of pressures or secondary interests and not exceeding the limits of their duties and competencies.

Art. 28 - It is prohibited for physician members of the SBR to sign reports or opinions for people who have not been examined by them as well to act as an expert or technical assistant for a patient, a family member, or anyone with whom they have a relationship capable of interfering with their expert work.

VI - CONTINUED MEDICAL EDUCATION

Art. 29 - There must be scientific independence from funders in all continuing medical education activities promoted by the SBR. Conflicts of interest should be avoided.

Art. 30 - The SBR clearly states that “Satellite Symposiums” in conferences, meetings and dissemination materials, which are not authored by it, are not educational programs of the SBR.

Art. 31 - All products displayed by the pharmaceutical or medical equipment industry in venues at scientific events organized by the SBR must necessarily be of professional and educational interest, according to ANVISA standards.

Art. 32 - For the elaboration of diagnostic or therapeutic guidelines of the SBR, the SBR will give preference to effective members who do not have conflicts of interest related to the pharmaceutical or medical equipment industry. In the occurrence of such conflicts, these conflicts must be explicitly stated.

Art. 33 - It is recommended that members of the SBR do not participate as teachers or organizers of specialization courses in Rheumatology not approved by the entity.

VII - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Art. 34 - The President and the President-Elect of the SBR may not actively participate as guests of events organized by the pharmaceutical or medical

equipment industry and may not have commercial ties with or receive sponsorship from these entities.

Art. 35 - Members of the Executive Board of the SBR, coordinators and members of committees, and representatives of the Panamerican League of Associations for Rheumatology (PANLAR), the Ministry of Health and the Brazilian Medical Association (AMB) may not use their positions to obtain advantages for themselves or for companies or entities with which they have a professional relationship.

Art. 36 - Members of the SBR, editors of *Advances in Rheumatology*, should not have financial interaction with the pharmaceutical or medical equipment industry.

Art. 37 - Members of the SBR, editors of *Advances in Rheumatology*, have the responsibility of determining conflicts of interest that disqualify authors or reviewers from this journal.

Art. 38 - Members of the SBR cannot exercise their profession with interaction with or dependence of commercial establishments, the pharmaceutical industry or any organization devoted to the manufacture, manipulation, promotion or commercialization of prescriptions.

Art. 39 - Members of the SBR who participate as lecturers in scientific meetings, symposia, conferences or other similar activities promoted by the SBR must declare relationships that may have real or potential influence on their presentation.

Art. 40 - Considering that there is scientific evidence that the relationship between physicians and the industry can negatively or unnecessarily influence the prescription of drugs and decisions about diagnosis and treatment, the SBR recommends to its members that they avoid receiving financial aid or sponsorship from the pharmaceutical or medical equipment industry to participate in educational events (conferences, meetings, symposia, lectures, etc.).

VIII - SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDICAL ADVERTISING

Art. 41 - Social media are tools designed to enable social interaction through which opinions, experiences, information, images, and video and audio clips are shared, including websites and applications used in social networks. The

following are considered social media: websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp and the like.

Art. 42 - Members must respect the Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet, Law no. 12.965/14, which establishes that users are ensured the inviolability of intimacy and privacy and protection and compensation for material or moral damage resulting from its violation.

Art. 43 - Members of the SBR, when using social networks, should maintain a posture that clearly distinguishes when they are speaking as healthcare professionals or as citizens.

Art. 44 - The use of social media among members of the SBR and their patients should not replace in-person medical consultations. At the discretion of the physician, the results of exams or new brief information may be sent electronically, respecting the confidentiality of the data.

Art. 45 - Members of the SBR should not expose the images of their patients to display a technique, method or result of treatment, even with the express authorization of the patients; in the same way, the SBR guides the patient not to do so, respecting medical confidentiality.

Art. 46 - Members of the SBR, when divulging medical matters, in any medium of mass communication, should base their conduct solely on the clarification and education of society, avoiding acting in a way that stimulates sensationalism, self-promotion or unfair competition. Members shall ensure the disclosure of scientifically proven, valid, and relevant content that is of public interest.

IX - ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

Art. 47 - The Ethics and Discipline Committee of the SBR shall receive and review formal complaints against any member for gross negligence or willful misconduct, simulation or fraud in the exercise of the profession or acts contrary to the SBR Statutes and Bylaws or that violate the provisions of this Code of Ethics.

Art. 48 - After receiving a complaint, the Ethics and Discipline Committee of the SBR will conduct a preliminary analysis, and if there is evidence of violation of this Code of Ethics, the Statutes or Bylaws of the SBR, it will send a letter to the President for the appropriate measures to be taken, in accordance with article

20 of the Statute; in the absence of evidence of violation, the Commission will take no further action on the complaint.

Art. 49 - After receiving a letter from the Ethics and Discipline Committee of the SBR, the President shall appoint a Complaints and Appeals Commission, which shall be governed by the terms established in article 68 and subsequent articles of the Bylaws and in the other provisions established in the Statutes.