



# Ethics and Boundaries for Community Health Services

Oneida Comprehensive  
Health Division

# Oneida Comprehensive Health Code of Conduct

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Standard Operating Procedure within the Oneida Comprehensive Health Division to assure that all employees are knowledgeable of the expectations of performance and conduct in patient care and patient contact areas.



Annual review and signature required of all Comprehensive Health Division Employees and contracted staff

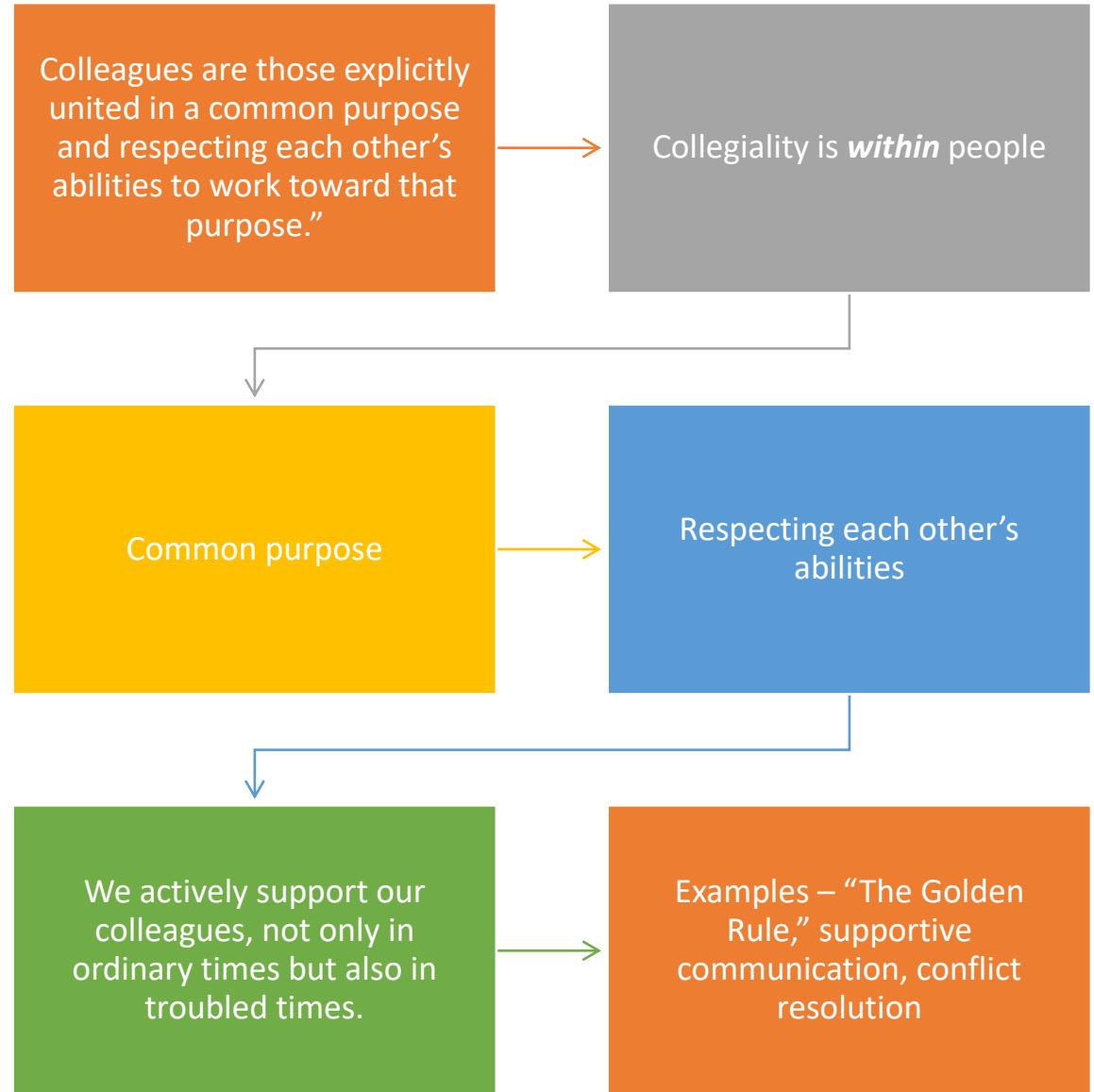


Purpose: "...all patient care activity takes place in an atmosphere of collegiality, cooperation and professionalism."

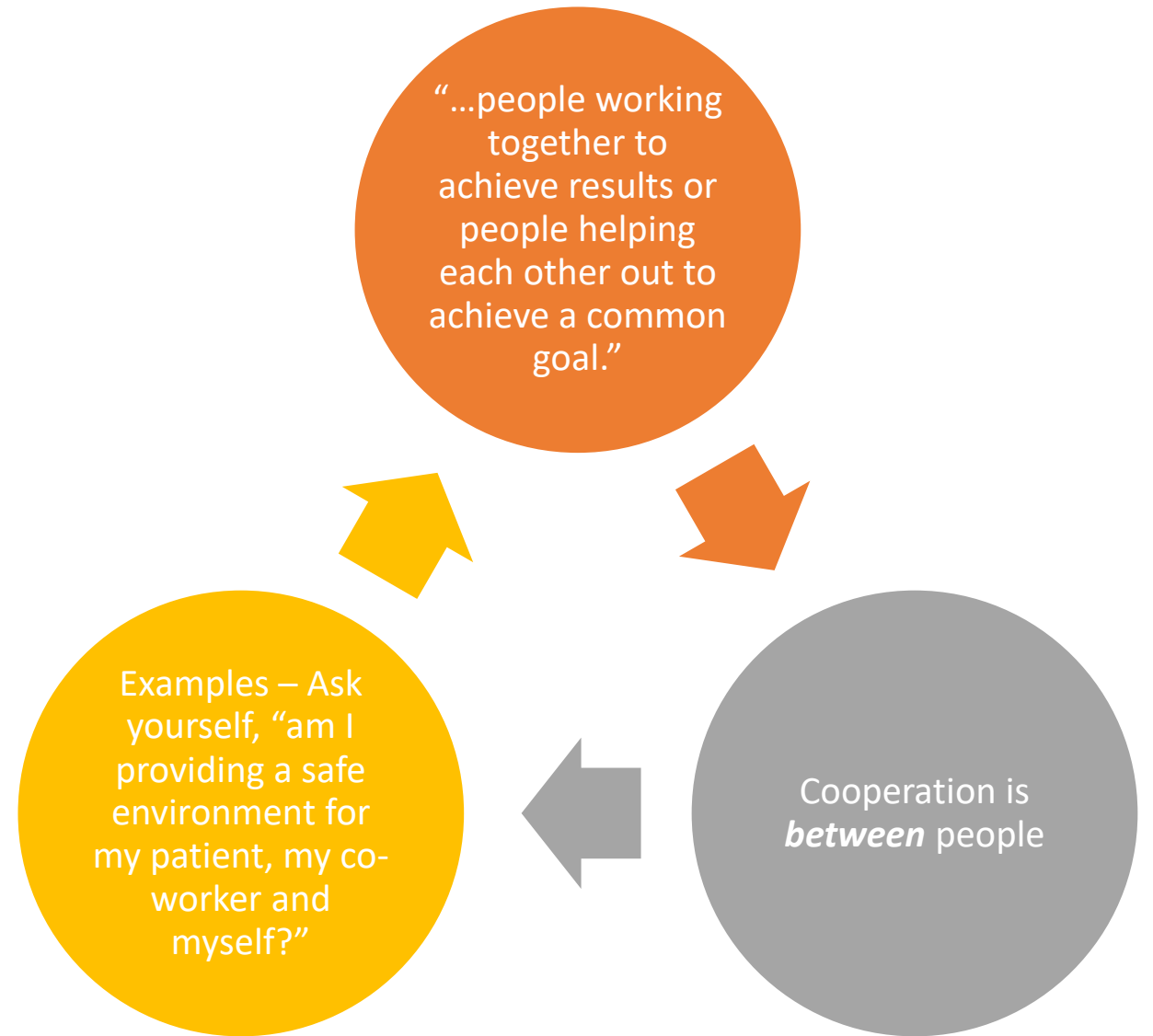
That does that mean?



# Collegiality



# Cooperation



# Professionalism

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“...the skill, good judgement, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well.”

Professionalism is being accountable for your actions at all times

Examples – Ask yourself, “what is the right thing to do?” “Am I showing or using respectful treatment?”



# Respectful Treatment and Safe Environment

Respectful Treatment:  
“...treat all people with  
respect, courtesy, and  
dignity...”



Safe Environment: “...the  
protection and safety of  
patients, employees,  
physicians and others in  
the Division...”



# Think about it...

Imagine you have a patient who has worked very hard his whole life to take care of his family. He is always friendly and happy to see you and never asks for special favors. Now you notice that his health is declining, and he needs help with transportation and care that he did not need before. Is it hard to be respectful about his care?

Imagine you have a patient who has always been difficult to care for. She often misses appointments. She is angry and you seem to be the cause of the anger. There have been some problems with appointments and referrals and each time she seems to find you as fault for it. Now she is declining and needs help with transportation and care that she did not need before. Is it hard to be respectful about her care?

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## Prohibited Conduct Includes:

“...undermining a patient’s trust in other caregivers or the Comprehensive Health Division.” Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or derogatory comments
- Racial or ethnic slurs
- Threats of violence
- Borrowing money from a patient/client
- Sexual comments/innuendos
- Outbursts of anger
- Criticizing co-workers in front of a patient
- Using foul language
- Acting in a rude, intimidating or otherwise unprofessional manner
- Engaging in retaliatory conduct
- Can you think of others?



# Reporting Concerns and Corrective Action

## **Report Concerns**

Report to your Supervisor

Report to the Quality Assurance Coordinator

Report to Comprehensive Health Division  
Management

## **Corrective Action could include**

Educational Efforts

Counseling

Warnings

Meeting with the employee

# Code of Ethics

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- The Oneida Nation has a Code of Ethics which applies to:
  - Governmental Services
  - Enterprise
  - Programs Employees (That's us)

“...intended to create a base from which all persons are expected to work upwards...”

Includes action as well as inaction

# What Does the Code of Ethics Prohibit?

Realizing	Realizing personal gain from official duties
Seeking	Seeking favor or profit
Accepting	Accepting a fee or gift without consent of the manager
Exercising	Exercising discretionary authority to their own benefit
Exposing	Exposing privileged information

# What Does the Code of Ethics Encourage?

Highest ideals of honor and integrity

Affirm the dignity and worth of the services

Maintain a constructive, creative and practical attitude toward community affairs

Strive for personal and professional excellence

Keep up to date on emerging issues

Respect, support, study and work to improve laws, policies and other regulations

# How do I report a concern about an ethical violation?



TALK TO YOUR SUPERVISOR



TALK TO THE QUALITY  
ASSURANCE COORDINATOR



TALK TO ANY MEMBER OF  
LEADERSHIP OF THE ONEIDA  
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH  
DIVISION



WHISTLE BLOWER LAW

# The Principles of the Ethical Practice of Public Health

In addition to the Oneida Nation Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics, we may also be guided by codes specific to our professions. Public Health Accreditation requires consideration of 12 Principals of Ethical Practice in Public Health.

1. Public health should address principally the fundamental causes of disease and requirements for health, aiming to prevent adverse health outcomes.
2. Public health should achieve community health in a way that respects the rights of individuals in the community.
3. Public health policies, programs, and priorities should be developed and evaluated through processes that ensure an opportunity for input from community members.
4. Public health should advocate and work for the empowerment of disenfranchised community members, aiming to ensure that the basic resources and conditions necessary for health are accessible to all.
5. Public health should seek the information needed to implement effective policies and programs that protect and promote health.
6. Public health institutions should provide communities with the information they have that is needed for decisions on policies or programs and should obtain the community's consent for their implementation.
7. Public health institutions should act in a timely manner on the information they have within the resources and the mandate given to them by the public.
8. Public health programs and policies should incorporate a variety of approaches that anticipate and respect diverse values, beliefs, and cultures in the community.
9. Public health programs and policies should be implemented in a manner that most enhances the physical and social environment.
10. Public health institutions should protect the confidentiality of information that can bring harm to an individual or community if made public. Exceptions must be justified on the basis of the high likelihood of significant harm to the individual or others.
11. Public health institutions should ensure the professional competence of their employees.
12. Public health institutions and their employees should engage in collaborations and affiliations in ways that build the public's trust and the institution's effectiveness.

Protecting Privacy,  
Building Healthy  
Boundaries

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HIPPA: Just  
when you  
thought you  
knew  
everything...

The Bottom Line! “Do not share any information about a patient that is not necessary for your care of the patient.”



Six (6) types of PHI (Protected Health Information):

Name or clues about the name	Address	Telephone Numbers	Email Address	Date of Birth	Social Security Number
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# 10 Most Common HIPPA Violations

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Employees disclosing PHI to friends or co-workers who do not NEED to know

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Mishandling of patient medical records

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Texting patient information

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Loss or theft of unencrypted devices – Phones and computers MUST be password protected

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Social Media – Patient information cannot be shared

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Employees illegally accessing medical records – you cannot look up your coworkers or family in the EMR

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Social Breaches – a community member asking a provider about a family member in public

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Unauthorized release of information – do not give out information without a release of information

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Accessing patient information on home computers – must be HIPPA compliant and company issued

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Lack of training

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# Protect yourself and your patient/client

DO NOT:

Post information or discuss a client or patient online

Expect privacy when using an electronic device

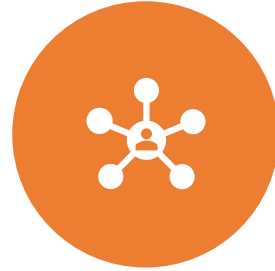
Lend your social networking device to a friend or family member

Post pictures or take pictures of clients/patients or their families

“Friend” clients/patients on social media

Discuss one client/patient in front of another or in front of your family or colleague’s unless they need to know.

# What Can Happen?



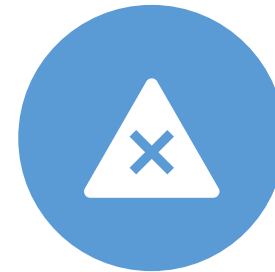
YOU CAN LOSE THE TRUST YOU  
HAVE ESTABLISHED WITH THE  
PATIENT/CLIENT



YOU CAN LOSE THE TRUST THE  
CLIENT HAS IN YOU AND ONEIDA  
COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH



ONEIDA COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CAN BE FINED AND  
PENALIZED



YOU CAN LOSE YOUR JOB  
AND/OR BE FINED

Video on Boundaries for Caregivers from the  
Brown County ADRC.

# Personal and Professional Relationships:

## Professional Relationships:

- Exist to meet specific needs of the client/patient
- Are unequal power relationships
- Have time limits
- Are controlled by laws, ethics and codes of conduct

## Personal Relationships:

- Exist to mutually meet various needs of both parties
- Are equal power relationships
- Have indefinite or even infinite time limits
- Are not controlled by laws, ethics or official codes of conduct

## **When Personal and Professional Boundaries get mixed together, it's always going to be difficult!**

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Blended relationships are especially significant because:

- Relationships cross many generations
- We have conflicted loyalties
- We are close-knit
- We see our patients for long periods of time and through emotionally difficult events





How do we honor both our personal and professional relationships?



Always keep the well-being of the client/patient in the front of your mind.



Ask “Who is this for?”



Know what you can't do.



Use regulations or policies as reason that you can't talk about things you used to talk about.



Be honest that this is hard!

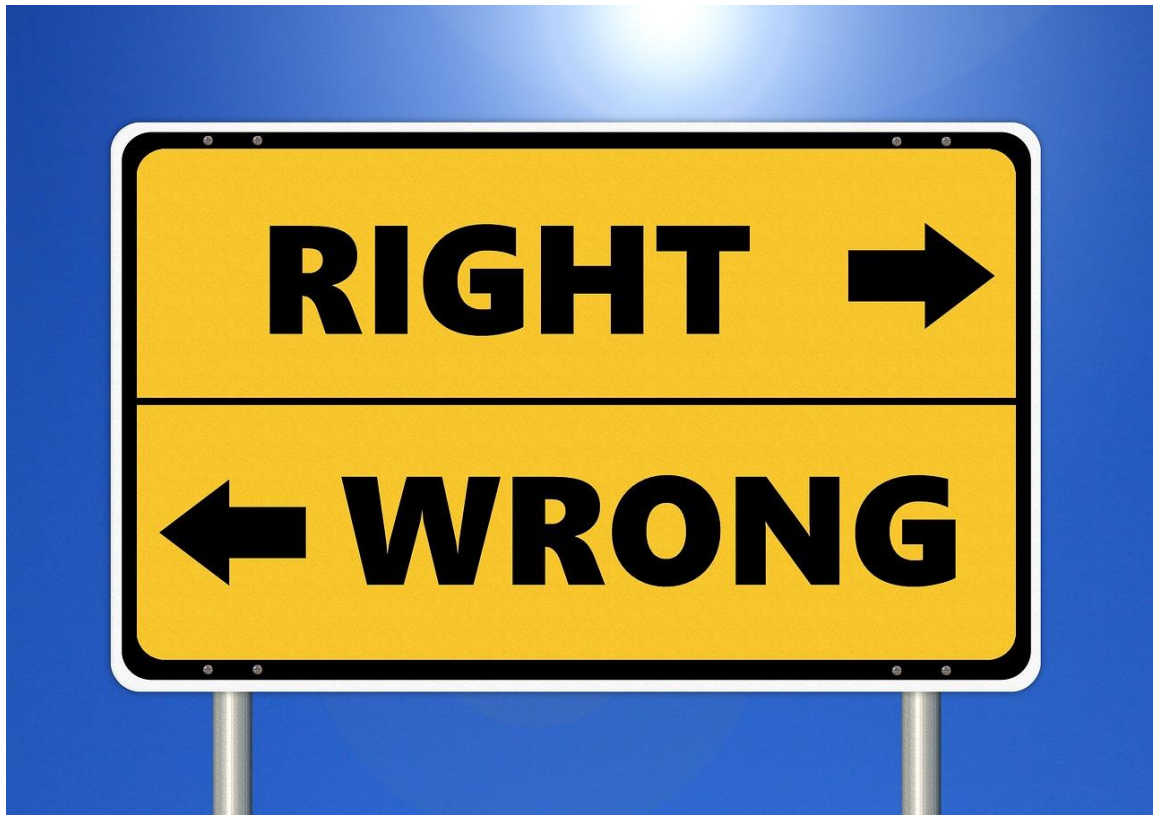
# Signs of Confused Boundaries

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- A client/patient starts giving you expensive or significant gifts.
- You visit the client/patient when you are not working and talk about work related issues
- You keep secrets for the client.
- You take sides in an argument between a client/patient and another provider or family member.
- You speak critically about a co-worker, employer or another client.







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As Health Care Workers, we all have the potential to commit an ethics or boundary violation, but all violations are preventable. Stop and take time to think about what you are doing and the impact it can and will have. You have the ability to recognize the red flags within yourself and ensure that you are acting in a professional manner at all times.



# Resources

Public Health Leadership Society

Oneida Nation Code of Ethics

Oneida Nation Code of Conduct

Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center

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