

Virginia Administrative Code

CHAPTER 80 REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PRACTICE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Part V. Standards of Professional Conduct

18VAC85-80-120. Confidentiality.

A practitioner shall not willfully or negligently breach the confidentiality between a practitioner and a patient. A breach of confidence that is required by applicable law or beyond the control of the practitioner shall not be considered negligent or willful.

18VAC85-80-121. Patient records.

A. Practitioners shall comply with provisions of § 32.1-127.1:03 related to the confidentiality and disclosure of patient records.

B. Practitioners shall provide patient records to another practitioner or to the patient or his authorized representative in a timely manner and in accordance with provisions of § 32.1-127.1:03 of the Code of Virginia.

C. Practitioners shall properly manage and keep timely, accurate, legible and complete patient records;

D. Practitioners who are employed by a health care institution, school system or other entity, in which the individual practitioner does not own or maintain his own records, shall maintain patient records in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employing entity.

E. Practitioners who are self-employed or employed by an entity in which the individual practitioner does own and is responsible for patient records shall:

1. Maintain a patient record for a minimum of six years following the last patient encounter with the following exceptions:

a. Records of a minor child, including immunizations, which shall be maintained until the child reaches the age of 18 or the age of emancipation, whichever comes first, except the minimum time for record retention shall be six years regardless of the age of the child at the last patient encounter; or

b. Records that have previously been transferred to another practitioner or health care provider or provided to the patient; or

c. Records that are required by contractual obligation or federal law to be maintained for a longer period of time.

2. From (insert effective date of regulations), post information or in some manner inform all patients concerning the time frame for record retention and destruction. Patient records shall only be destroyed in a manner that protects patient confidentiality, such as by incineration or shredding.

F. When a practitioner is closing, selling or relocating his practice, he shall meet the requirements of § 54.1-2405 of the Code of Virginia for giving notice that copies of records can be sent to any like-regulated provider of the patient's choice or provided to the patient.

18VAC85-80-122. Practitioner-patient communication; termination of relationship.

A. Communication with patients.

1. Except as provided in § 32.1-127.1:03 F of the Code of Virginia, a practitioner shall accurately present information to a patient or his legally authorized representative in terms that are understandable and encourage participation in decisions regarding the patient's care.

2. A practitioner shall not deliberately make a false or misleading statement regarding the practitioner's skill or the efficacy or value of a treatment or procedure provided or directed by the practitioner in the treatment of any disease or condition.

3. Practitioners shall adhere to requirements of § 32.1-162.18 of the Code of Virginia for obtaining informed consent from patients prior to involving them as subjects in human research that affects their care.

B. Termination of the practitioner/patient relationship.

1. The practitioner or the patient may terminate the relationship. In either case, the practitioner shall make the patient record available, except in situations where denial of access is allowed by law.

2. A practitioner shall not terminate the relationship or make his services unavailable without documented notice to the patient that allows for a reasonable time to obtain the services of another practitioner.

18VAC85-80-123. Practitioner responsibility.

A practitioner shall not:

1. Perform procedures or techniques that are outside the scope of his practice or for which he is not trained and individually competent;

2. Knowingly allow subordinates to jeopardize patient safety or provide patient care outside of the subordinate's scope of practice or their area of responsibility. Practitioners shall delegate patient care only to subordinates who are properly trained and supervised;

3. Engage in an egregious pattern of disruptive behavior or interaction in a health care setting that interferes with patient care or could reasonably be expected to adversely impact the quality of care rendered to a patient; or

4. Exploit the practitioner/patient relationship for personal gain.

B. Advocating for patient safety or improvement in patient care within a health care entity shall not constitute disruptive behavior provided the practitioner does not engage in behavior prohibited in A 3 of this section.

18VAC85-80-124. Sexual contact.

A. For purposes of §§ 54.1-2914 A 7 and 54.1-2914 A 14 of the Code of Virginia and this section, sexual contact includes, but is not limited to, sexual behavior or verbal or physical behavior which:

1. May reasonably be interpreted as intended for the sexual arousal or gratification of the practitioner, the patient, or both; or
2. May reasonably be interpreted as romantic involvement with a patient regardless of whether such involvement occurs in the professional setting or outside of it.

B. Sexual contact with a patient.

1. The determination of when a person is a patient for purposes of §54.1-2914 A 14 of the Code of Virginia is made on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to the nature, extent, and context of the professional relationship between the practitioner and the person. The fact that a person is not actively receiving treatment or professional services from a practitioner is not determinative of this issue. A person is presumed to remain a patient until the patient-practitioner relationship is terminated.
2. The consent to, initiation of, or participation in sexual behavior or involvement with a practitioner by a patient does not change the nature of the conduct nor negate the statutory prohibition.

C. Sexual contact between a practitioner and a former patient.

Sexual contact between a practitioner and a former patient after termination of the practitioner-patient relationship may still constitute unprofessional conduct if the sexual contact is a result of the exploitation of trust, knowledge, or influence of emotions derived from the professional relationship.

D. Sexual contact between a practitioner and a key third party shall constitute unprofessional conduct if the sexual contact is a result of the exploitation of trust, knowledge or influence derived from the professional relationship or if the contact has had or is likely to have an adverse effect on patient care. For purposes of this section, key third party of a patient shall mean: spouse or partner, parent or child, guardian, or legal representative of the patient.

E. Sexual contact between a supervisor and a trainee shall constitute unprofessional conduct if the sexual contact is a result of the exploitation of trust, knowledge or influence derived from the professional relationship or if the contact has had or is likely to have an adverse effect on patient care.

18VAC85-80-125. Refusal to provide information.

A practitioner shall not willfully refuse to provide information or records as requested or required by the board or its representative pursuant to an investigation or to the enforcement of a statute or regulation.