

CCCS Code of Conduct Policy

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The Canadian Critical Care Society (CCCS) is committed to providing a friendly, safe and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national or ethnic origin, or other characteristics. This *Code of Conduct* outlines our expectations for participant behavior and the consequences of unacceptable behavior. In the context of meetings that we host/co-host, we expect all attendees, media, speakers, volunteers, organizers, venue staff, and exhibitors to help us to ensure a safe and positive conference experience for all who attend our meetings and events. Outside of these meetings, we also expect our members to model the same behavior as when attending CCCS related activities.

This policy aims to meet the following objectives during our meetings:

- 1) All participants at events organized by the CCCS should have an equal opportunity to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as participants, without being prevented or hindered by discriminatory practices based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national or ethnic origin, or other characteristics.
- 2) All participants and attendees should engage in respectful communication, free of harassment and intimidation. Discussion of opposing or different viewpoints is appropriate but is expected to be conducted in a respectful manner and tone.

This policy also seeks to ensure that our members always model similar conduct, when conducting activities outside of CCCS meetings related to their CCCS membership.

For the purpose of this Code of Conduct Policy, a participant is defined as a presenter, adjudicator, observer, attendee or organizer of an event (meeting, conference, etc.). Harassment is defined as engaging in verbal discourse (remarks/jokes) or conduct (threats, intimidation, physical contact) that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome.

Code of Conduct

1. Be considerate, respectful, collaborative and professional (see glossary).
2. Refrain from behaviours and speech that are intimidating, uncivil (glossary), demeaning, discriminatory, derogatory, abusive, or harassing.
3. Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert CCCS staff (duty officer or member of the Board of Directors) if you notice someone in distress or in a dangerous or harassing situation.

Participants at events hosted or cohosted/cosponsored by the CCCS will not engage in behavior(s) that undermine or oppose the goals and purposes of CCCS including, but not limited to:

- A. Using offensive language or behavior.
- B. Making denigrating comments on the basis of, but not limited to, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national or ethnic origin, or other characteristics.

- C. Acting in ways that harass, threaten, assault, or intimidate other participants.
- D. Performing acts that damage or destroy property that belongs to others.
- E. Acting in a manner that threatens the safety of participants.
- F. Engaging in behaviours that interfere with the ability of other participants to engage in and enjoy formally scheduled meetings or conferences.

Scope and Adjudication Process

The scope of this policy is broad and includes conduct at CCCS hosted/cohosted events (e.g., meetings, conferences) and conduct in CCCS related activities outside of CCCS hosted/cohosted events (e.g., individuals who represent the CCCS at international meetings/events, interviews with the media).

In meeting our objective of creating a safe environment for all participants, an environment where ideas can be debated and discussed, free of harassment and abuse, we will:

- (i) support an open environment where incidents/events (inappropriate behavior/verbal discourse) can be brought forward without fear of reprisal,
- (ii) investigate and discuss events with all involved parties in the spirit of due process,
- (iii) take appropriate action when all sides have been heard (e.g., educate, remediate, request participant to remove him/herself from meetings, withhold/revoke membership, and/or positions held within the CCCS) depending on the circumstances (i.e., nature, frequency and severity of the incident/events).
- (iv) Ensure that individuals who are responsible for implementing this policy are free from conflicts of interest so they may fairly adjudicate and provide guidance to all parties involved

If at any time, a member feels that he or she has been treated unfairly in the decision-making process, he/she has the right to appeal the decision. For immediate removals from meetings, a formal appeal must be requested and addressed in writing to the President of the CCCS. Reasons for appeals will include 1) new information that has been brought forward; 2) an undeclared conflict of interest by the adjudicator(s); and 3) a review of the sanction (if considered unduly harsh by the accused). The President will rapidly review the rationale and decide on the timing and an appropriate process for the appeal.

At Meetings or CCCS hosted/cohosted events:

For each CCCS hosted/co-hosted meeting, the President will appoint 2 'Duty Officers' from the CCCS Board of Directors (Executive/Directors) or Committee members (e.g., Past President, Treasurer, Scientific Chair, Communications Chair, members of the Scientific Committee), ideally composed of members that reflect our diversity, to be the points of contact.

The CCCS reserves the right to ask any participant to remove him/herself from the formally scheduled meeting or conference proceedings if (i) his/her language or behaviours towards others contravene

the above Code or (ii) he/she continues to engage in these interactions after the unwelcome nature of their conduct has been communicated directly to him/her. The CCCS also reserves the right to ask any participant to remove him/herself from the formally scheduled meeting or conference proceedings if he/she appears intoxicated *and* if he/she engages in conduct that interferes with the ability of other attendees to participate in and enjoy the meeting or conference.

Depending on the circumstances (e.g., repeated incidents/events), the Duty Officers (ideally composed of members that reflect our diversity) will investigate and discuss events with all involved parties and take appropriate action in consultation with the CCCS Board of Directors (Executive/Directors) or Committee members.

Outside of CCCS hosted/cohosted events:

Outside of CCCS events, members who feel that they have experienced unacceptable behavior or verbal discourse should alert the Past President or a current member of the CCCS Board of Directors (Executive/Directors) to the incident. These individuals will investigate and discuss events with all involved parties and take appropriate action in consultation with the CCCS Board of Directors depending on the circumstances.

Deciding when to allow individuals to stay or return at meetings

The two main factors that will guide decisions regarding whether participants who contravene the above Code can stay or return:

- Whether it is reasonable to think that the individual will continue to violate our code of conduct.
- Whether attendees will feel safe if the individual remains or returns.

These decisions will be discussed and formulated by at least 3 members of the CCCS Board of Directors, including the Current President and Past President, if present and uninvolved in contravention of the code of conduct, and substituted by the Secretary, followed by the Treasurer - if one or more of the above individuals is not present.

What to do if you witness or experience conduct that violates the code?

Conduct in violation of this Code should be brought to the attention of the Past President or a member of the CCCS Board of Directors promptly. Alternatively, if members wish to disclose events in a confidential manner they may approach a member of the CCCS Secretariat with their concerns.

Awareness

To ensure broad scale awareness of this policy, we will:

1. Post this policy on the CCCS website.
2. Reference this policy in conference/meeting materials (e.g., program, handbook) with links to the CCCS website.
3. Mention/highlight this policy (in brief) in the opening announcements of meetings/conferences that it participates in (referencing the full documents available on the CCCS website)
4. Appoint 2 'Duty Officers' from the CCCS Board of Directors (Past President, Treasurer, Scientific Chair, Communications Chair, members of committees), ideally composed of members that reflect our diversity, to be the points of contact for CCCS meetings.
5. The Past President and a current member of the CCCS Board of Directors (Executive/Directors) will be the contact persons for potential incidents that occur outside of meetings and will provide follow-up with the involved individuals.

Glossary

Professionalism is defined by CanMEDS as “being committed to the health and well-being of individual patients and society through ethical practice, high personal standards of behaviour, accountability to the profession and society, physician-led regulation, and maintenance of personal health”.

Incivility can be defined as rude or unsociable speech or behavior; it encompasses a wide gamut of overt and covert actions. Although aggressive actions such as actual physical harm, throwing objects, threats, inappropriate language, and verbal intimidation are easily recognized as disruptive, less aggressive behavior such as facial expressions, social remarks and demeaning comments may also be considered disruptive. More subtle forms of incivility may include deliberate avoidance, failure to respond to phone calls or emails, non-participation and lackadaisical performance.¹

¹ Swiggart WH, Dewey CM, Higgson GB, Finlayson AJR, and Spigkard Jr WA. A Plan for Identification, Treatment and Remediation of Disruptive Behaviors in Physicians. *Frontiers of health services management*. 25. 3-11.

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