



ASSOCIATION DES ART-THÉRAPEUTES DU QUÉBEC

THE ART THERAPIST'S ETHICAL STANDARDS AND CODE OF ETHICS

Ratified :

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CONSULTATION AND SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

The Ethical Standards and Code of Ethics for AATQ Art Therapists 2021 version results from the consultation of the following document and is inspired by them:

- *Le Code de déontologie des art-thérapeutes*, AATQ (January 1986, revised July 2001, revised June 2005)
- Standards of Practice, CATA (published in 2003-2004)
- Ethical Principles for Art Therapists, AATA (revised 4 December 2013)
- Code of Ethics, Conduct, and Disciplinary Procedures: Art Therapy (Credentials Board, Inc.), ATCB (September 2016)
- Commitment to Diversity: The North American Drama Therapy Association (NADTA, 2018)

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PREAMBLE

The *Association des art-thérapeutes du Québec (AATQ)* is a non-profit association that pursues the following objectives:

- Defend the interests of art therapists in the exercise of their professional activities;
- Inform the public and health professionals about services, professional practice and training in art therapy;
- Provide members and affiliate members with tools and opportunities for their professional development;
- Promote the professional development of art therapy in Quebec.

In the absence of a professional order, the AATQ also has the mandate, not the legal authority, to protect the interests of those who use art therapy services in Quebec by maintaining integrity and standards of practice and professional training. The principles set out in this document deal with ethical standards and reflect many of the situations encountered daily by art therapists in the practice of their profession. These principles are based on fundamental values of dignity and human rights. These values permeate the chapters and articles contained in this document and are described as follows:

Autonomy: The art therapist respects the rights of individuals to make their own choices regarding the direction of their life, as well as the goals and options for the intervention they receive. The art therapist accompanies individuals and provides them with help in making informed choices to help them achieve their goals.

Benevolence: The art therapist does their work with kind words and a kind attitude towards the individuals, families, groups and communities with whom they work. Thus, the art therapist promotes well-being by choosing practices that will most actively benefit everyone. They also remain aware of the potential impact of the quality of their own physical and mental health on their ability to help those served.

Reliability and responsibility: The art therapist respects the established professional codes of conduct. They clearly inform the client about their role and professional obligations as art therapists, and they accept responsibilities in line with their professional expertise and capacity to provide support. The art therapist seeks to avoid conflicts of interest that may result in exploitation or any kind of harm and avoids gaining personal benefits from any professional situation.

Integrity: The art therapist acts with integrity towards clients, colleagues and community members. Art therapists remain authentic and honest with themselves and others, both in gestures and attitudes related to their professional commitment, and they can be relied upon to keep their agreements.

Justice, dignity and respect for the person: The art therapist recognizes that each individual is free, unique and evolving and that each individual has an essential place in the collectivity. The art therapist is committed to treating all people fairly to ensure that clients have equal access to services.

Creativity: The art therapist promotes the development and use of the imaginary to foster the understanding of oneself, others and the world. They oversee the creative process and encourage expression, decision-making and resolution of creative problems while guiding their clients.

The elaboration of these ethical principles, which guide the behaviours associated with the practice of the profession of art therapy, requires a personal commitment on the part of the art therapist and a constant effort to act ethically. The art therapist is encouraged to cooperate in the application of these rules to consult, as needed, with colleagues or other persons who may be able to advise him or her on any ethical questions. Finally, by establishing these standards, art therapists affirm the desire to act ethically in their actions.

CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 The art therapist should view these ethical standards as codes of conduct to practice their profession. It shall be the only document to which they will be accountable either to the public or to his colleagues.

1.2 The art therapist's ethical standards have been adopted by the *Association des art-thérapeutes du Québec* and constitute the document governing all professional standards to be followed by practicing art therapists, students and interns engaged in the study of art therapy.

1.3 In this document, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words mean:

- "Client" is a person to whom an art therapist renders professional services;
- "Art therapist" is a person who has completed their professional training of Master of Art Therapy and who is using art as an approach;
- "Art therapy student" is a person who is following a graduate art therapy training program from a university or institute meeting the standards for art therapy training of the *Association des art-thérapeutes du Québec*;
- "Art therapy intern" is a student art therapist who is in the process of fulfilling the supervised practicum required by a recognized graduate art therapy program.
- "Legal representative" is a person who performs an act in the name of, in the place of, and on behalf of a person, by virtue of a power conferred by law. This includes: the holder of parental authority or guardian of a minor, and the guardian, curator, or agent of a mandate given by the person in anticipation of their incapacity and probated, in respect of an incapacitated adult.

CHAPTER II: DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS THE PUBLIC

2.1 The art therapist is responsible for the influence their public behaviour may have on society, on the profession of art therapy and on their ability to perform as a professional. The art therapist has duties and obligations towards the public in their clinical, pedagogical, research or internship functions.

2.2 The art therapist must take into account the theoretical, practical and scientific principles generally recognized in art therapy in their professional practice. They maintain knowledge of current professional developments to render the highest possible level of professional services.

2.3 The art therapist must take into consideration the effects that their research work and practice may have on an individual, a group or society.

2.4 The art therapist shall foster the quality and availability of professional services in their field of practice.

2.5 The art therapist shall foster measures aiming to educate and inform the public in their field of practice.

2.6 The art therapist must avoid any misleading representation of their level of academic or professional competence and of the services they provide. The art therapist's qualifications must be displayed clearly or at least shown to the client.

2.7 Any art therapy intern who is not fully qualified to provide professional art therapy services has the responsibility and the duty to clearly inform the client of their professional status of intern in relation to the different academic and professional categories related to the practice of art therapy.

2.8 The art therapist must avoid all actions which could possibly violate or diminish any civil, legal or human rights of any kind whatsoever.

2.9 As a researcher, the art therapist is subject to federal, provincial and local laws and institutional regulations regarding the use of participants in research. This also applies to interventions in art therapy in an international context.

CHAPTER III: DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS THE CLIENT

SECTION I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

3.1 Before accepting a request for services and while carrying it out, the art therapist shall take into consideration their limitations in skill, experience, training, education and resources. The art therapist must not undertake professional work for which they are not sufficiently prepared.

3.2 Where the interests of the client so require, the art therapist must consult another art therapist or a member of another profession for supervision, or refer the client to another professional. In the event that the art therapist is unable to maintain services with the client, they must refer the client to another professional.

3.3 When necessary, the art therapist must consult with or be supervised by an art therapist or another qualified mental health practitioner.

3.4 Before beginning to provide art therapy services, the art therapist must explain to their client that they have the right at any time to refuse or discontinue the professional services and thus to withdraw their free and informed consent. In addition, the art therapist shall at all times recognize the right of their client to consult another art therapist, a member of another profession or any other person.

3.5 The art therapist shall refrain from practicing art therapy while in a physical or mental state that could impair the quality of services offered. In particular, they shall not practice art therapy while under the influence of a substance that could cause inebriation, weakness or impairment of his faculties.

3.6 The art therapist must recognize that personal problems and conflicts may interfere with their professional effectiveness. Accordingly, they should refrain from undertaking any professional activity which may lead to inadequate performance or cause harm to a client, a colleague, a student or a research participant. If already engaged in such activities, the art therapist has a duty to determine whether to suspend, stop or limit their professional services, or to seek professional services if necessary.

3.7 The art therapist shall establish and maintain a relationship of mutual trust with their clients.

3.8 The art therapist may not make a formal diagnosis relating to the client unless the art therapist is qualified (by a professional order) to do so. The art therapist can give the client opinions and advice if they have obtained sufficient professional information. If needed, the art therapist must refer the client to other professionals who can legally make diagnoses. However, the art therapist can perform evaluations in order to carry out an appropriate art therapy intervention plan.

3.9 The art therapist shall refrain from interfering in the moral and legal affairs of the client. The art therapist must also refrain from obtaining personal information about the client that is unrelated to the agreed professional services.

3.10 According to the practice environment, the art therapist must offer art therapy services in a safe, private and functional place that helps safeguard the client's health (e.g., an office or studio with proper ventilation and appropriate lighting). The art therapist strives to offer services in a place where the confidentiality of the client is respected, ideally by having a place of safe storage for the client's artwork.

3.11 The art therapist must be aware of provincial, federal and local laws of the place where they offer art therapy services, and the provincial, federal and local laws of the place where his clients live. Laws vary according to the places in question, and it is the art therapist's responsibility to inquire about relevant legal information in order to meet these specific criteria. This also applies to the context of intervention in international art therapy.

SECTION II: INTEGRITY AND OBJECTIVITY

3.12 The art therapist must fulfill their professional obligations with integrity and objectivity.

3.13 The art therapist makes sure not to prolong a therapeutic relationship or a follow-up for the sole purpose of financial gain, especially when the client consultation is no longer necessary.

3.14 The art therapist must ensure that the client or the client’s legal representative knows all the aspects of the art therapy intervention used to choose whether the therapist’s professional services are suitable for them. The art therapist must inform the client about their rights and roles, the expectations and objectives of the art therapy interventions and the limits of art therapy services.

3.15 The art therapist shall avoid any misrepresentation relating to their competence, the effectiveness of their services, or of the services provided by members of their profession.

3.16 The art therapist shall refrain from providing professional services to persons with whom they have a relationship that could adversely affect the quality of their services.

3.17 Except for professional fees, the art therapist shall have no financial dealings with the client that could adversely affect the quality of their services.

3.18 The art therapist shall avoid unnecessarily performing or repeating professional acts; the art therapist always considers the client’s needs when administering art therapy services.

SECTION III: AVAILABILITY AND DILIGENCE

3.19 The art therapist shall be available to the client and show diligence in their professional efforts. If unable to meet a request within a reasonable time, the art therapist shall inform the client of the time when they are available and, if necessary, refer the client to another resource person. If the sessions are missed or canceled by the client, the art therapist must offer the client the opportunity to promptly make a new appointment.

3.20 The art therapist shall give the client all the relevant explanations necessary to understand and assess the art therapy services offered.

3.21 The art therapist may provide a written or verbal report to the client upon request. The art therapist may charge for this service and request a period of 30 days to produce the report.

3.22 The art therapist may terminate services to a client in the following situations (or any other situation that compromises the quality of the services rendered):

- a lack of any further benefit to the client from the art therapy services;
- if there is evidence of a conflict of interest between the art therapist and the client or of a situation jeopardizing the relationship between the two;
- an incitement by the client to perform illegal, unfair or fraudulent acts.

3.23 The art therapist shall give the client reasonable notice before terminating services. The art therapist must ensure that the termination of services causes no prejudice to the client and refer the client to other professionals.

SECTION IV: LIABILITY

3.24 The art therapist shall, at all times, accept personal civil liability which excludes any clause of non-liability from the service contract.

SECTION V: INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY

3.25 The art therapist shall put the client’s interest before the art therapist’s own personal interest, the interests of their employer, their colleagues or other people. The art therapist shall also disregard any third-party intervention which could adversely affect their professional performance.

3.26 The art therapist shall maintain professional independence and avoid any situation that would create a conflict of interest.

3.27 If the art therapist finds that they have or that they run the risk of having a conflict of interest, they must clarify the nature and direction of their obligations and responsibilities and inform the client of this conflict of interest.

3.28 The art therapist may share their professional fees with another person only when the shared fee corresponds to a division of professional services and responsibilities.

3.29 The art therapist shall not accept or pay any benefit, rebate, or commission for their professional practice in addition to the remuneration provided for their professional services.

3.30 The art therapist acts in accordance with a duty of impartiality when working with several clients who may have divergent interests. The art therapist must specify the nature of their responsibilities and must inform all interested parties that they will cease to act if the situation becomes irreconcilable with their duty of impartiality.

The art therapist shall act in the interests of only one party in the same case. If the art therapist's professional duty requires them to act otherwise, the art therapist shall specify the nature of their responsibilities and inform all interested parties that they will cease to act if the situation should prevent them from remaining impartial.

SECTION VI: PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

3.31 The art therapist is bound by professional confidentiality. They must keep the verbal and artistic content of art therapy sessions confidential.

3.32 The art therapist can be released from professional confidentiality only through written authorization from the client or the client's legal representative, or by order of the law.

3.33 The art therapist shall inform the client of the limits of confidentiality. When the art therapist asks the client to reveal confidential information or when the client entrusts the art therapist with confidential information, the client must be made fully aware of how this information could be used and agree to it.

3.34 The art therapist shall not reveal the identity of the client.

3.35 The art therapist shall ensure that any other professional they collaborate with regarding a client, preserve the confidentiality of the client.

3.36 The art therapist preserves the client's anonymity when using the client's information for teaching or scientific purposes unless a formal authorization has been given by the client.

3.37 If the art therapist is called upon to give an expert evaluation before a court of justice, they must inform the client or client's guardian. The art therapist must limit their report and deposition before the court to information relevant to the case.

3.38 The client's clinical record and artwork must be kept for the duration stipulated by the federal, provincial, local and/or institutional regulations that apply to the performance of the art therapist's duties according to their practice location. Also, the way the client's clinical record and artwork are stored and destroyed at the end of the scheduled period must respect the client's confidentiality.

3.39 Art therapists must obtain prior written authorization from the persons concerned, as well as inform them of the terms and conditions of revocation, if they wish to make an audio or video recording of an interview, activity, teaching, research or to promote their services.

3.40 The art therapist whose clients are a couple or a family must ensure the confidentiality of each follow-up. This includes the confidentiality of the written and visual files, the targeted mandate or [intervention](#) objectives and information about each person involved. The art therapist must keep one file per client.

3.41 The art therapist must always maintain the confidentiality of the client's identity and not use the client's confidential information to gain personal advantages or to benefit a third party.

SECTION VII: PROFESSIONAL USE OF THE INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC OR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

3.42 Social networks, exchange groups, blogs, websites and other electronic media contain information that is accessible to the public. In turn, the art therapist takes the necessary steps to protect their clients' personal or professional information that should not be shared on social media.

3.43 The art therapist informs clients of the confidentiality limitations of online professional activities. Encryption limits, the lasting nature of messages exchanged via e-mail, public access to information and the permanent display of clients' artwork on websites must be explained to the client.

3.44 Art therapists are responsible for discussing the benefits and limitations of their services with clients interested in art therapy or digital supervision. Art therapists shall use their services in a secure and confidential way.

3.45 Art therapists who offer services or information by electronic transmission shall inform clients of the limits to confidentiality. The art therapist shall obtain the client or the legal representative's informed consent for providing services electronically.

SECTION VIII: CLIENT ARTWORK

3.46 The artwork made by clients in art therapy sessions shall be treated with respect and dignity. Artwork confidentiality is an integral part of the art therapy process and must be ensured in all workplaces (e.g., hospitals, rehabilitation centers, private clinics, community service centers, school environments, etc.).

3.47 Prior to initiating the provision of professional services, the art therapist must inform each client or their legal representatives, if the client is a child under the age of 18, of information regarding the ownership, confidentiality, and disposition of the visual productions produced during the art therapy sessions. A youth 14 years of age or older may consent alone for services if the art therapist belongs to a professional order or/and holds a psychotherapy license.

3.48 All artwork belongs to the client. It can be given to the client during a session or at the end of a follow-up in accordance with the therapeutic objectives. Before giving professional services, the art therapist shall explain how the client's artwork, photographs and digital images are stored, and for how long. All artworks must be kept under lock and key by the art therapist throughout the follow-up. Unclaimed artwork will be kept according to the terms and conditions set out in the written consent. The artwork will be destroyed later in accordance with the rules of confidentiality.

3.49 Art therapists must obtain written authorization from their clients or their legal representatives in the case of children under 18 years of age, to reproduce their works for the purpose of sharing them with an outside team involved in the case. If the art therapist is part of a team that includes a professional who is a member of a professional order or holds the title of psychotherapist, and if a shared consent is applied, the art therapist must obtain the written consent of the legal representative of the child under the age of 14.

3.50 The art therapist who wishes to exhibit the client's artwork created as part of the art therapy sessions must obtain the written consent of the client or their legal representative.

In the case of a client under the age of 18, the art therapist must obtain the consent of the client's legal representative. By law, consent for a client who is declared legally unfit must be obtained from a legal representative. Subsequently, if the person becomes legally fit, they can give their consent.

3.51 The art therapist who wishes to use client artwork for clinical and/or educational purposes must first obtain the written permission of the client or the client's legal representative. The art therapist shall inform the client of the context in which the artwork will be used.

In the case of a group session, the art therapist must ensure that informed consent is obtained from all members of the group.

3.52 In the context of a publication or exhibition, written permission must contain the date, the place, the explicit purpose of the publication or exhibition, as well as the client's contact information. The art therapist shall inform the client of the benefits and consequences of publishing or exhibiting artwork. The art therapist ensures that the artwork is used in a manner consented to by the client.

With regard to online exhibitions, the art therapist notifies the client of the extended availability of images, as well as the potential for downloading, transmission or copying by users. In the case of artwork for sale, the art therapist and the client discuss the therapeutic impact and how the proceeds will be used (e.g., by clients, organizations, social causes, etc.).

3.53 In order to maintain the confidentiality and identity of the client, the art therapist shall at all times preserve the client's identifying personal information and any information that reveals the reasons for consultation. The art therapist honors at all times the dignity of the client and respect for the client and the client's artwork when making public presentations in varied contexts, for example in educational centers, conferences, research, or other contexts or places. The art therapist protects the client's identity and conceals any part of the artwork or video that could reveal the client's identity.

3.54 The art therapist must obtain written consent to use the client's artwork for promotional or advertising purposes. Anonymity and confidentiality must be preserved unless the client signs a formal authorization stating that they wish to be identified.

- 3.55** If art therapy services are terminated because of the death of the client, the artwork is released under certain conditions:
- The client has signed a consent that sets out under what circumstances and to whom the artwork should be released.
 - The client is a minor or under guardianship and the art therapist determines that the artwork does not violate the client's confidentiality.
 - The art therapist documented verbal information according to which the client wanted the artwork to be given to a third party.

SECTION IX: ACCESS TO RECORDS

3.56 The art therapist shall respond to any request from a client to view or obtain a copy of their file within 30 days of receipt of the request. The art therapist presents or gives progress notes to the client having ensured that they do not harm the client or any third party.

The art therapist may charge the client a sensible fee not exceeding the cost of reproducing or transcribing these documents and the cost of transmitting a copy thereof. The art therapist who intends to charge such fees must inform the client of the approximate fee before proceeding.

SECTION X: DETERMINATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES

3.57 The art therapist is aware that the determination and payment of fees may become therapy issues and shall be decided upon with due consideration of the client. The art therapist must not financially exploit their client.

3.58 The art therapist shall charge and accept fees that are fair and reasonable, warranted by the circumstances, and proportional to the services provided. The art therapist must take the following factors into account when determining fees:

- the art therapist's experience and skills;
- the time spent in providing the professional service;
- the complexity and extent of services rendered;
- the performance of unusual services or of services requiring exceptional competence or speed;
- the need to collect fees in order to establish a professional relationship with the client; this does not exclude a minimal amount being charged to clients experiencing financial difficulties.

3.59 The art therapist shall provide the client with all the explanations necessary to understand their professional fees and terms of payment.

3.60 The art therapist may not require advance payment of professional fees. However, on the basis of a written agreement with the client, the art therapist may require an advance payment to cover expenditures incurred in the provision of the professional services required.

3.61 The art therapist shall provide the client with advance knowledge of the cost of the professional services and inform the client of any changes to these. As others in helping professions, a written consent form is recommended.

3.62 The art therapist may not charge interest on an account unless the client has been dutifully notified. Interest thus charged must be set at a reasonable rate and congruent with current rates.

3.63 Before taking legal action, the art therapist shall make sure to have exhausted all other available means to obtain payment.

3.64 If the art therapist entrusts another person with the collection of his fees, they must ensure that the latter will act with tact and moderation.

SECTION XI: DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

3.65 Art therapists are actively trying to understand and respect the diversity of their clients. They engage in a professional development process related to differences in age, culture, ethnicity, intellectual ability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status or other diversities.

3.66 Art therapists offer fair professional services taking into account the differences of each person.

3.67 Art therapists are aware of their own values, beliefs and attitudes, as well as of the way in which they can influence the therapeutic mandate and the treatment goals.

3.68 When working with a client from a different culture from their own, art therapists are encouraged to be supervised by a professional who has experience with that cultural group. It is also possible to get support from associations related to this cultural group in the interest of their client.

3.69 Art therapists acquire knowledge of the individual differences that exist within the cultural groups with which they work. They are sensitive to the differences between these groups, and they strive to learn about the client's belief systems.

3.70 Art therapists exercise good judgement while conducting art therapy clinical evaluations with minority groups or those not representing the group to which the assessment instruments have been standardized. They take into account differences related to age, culture, ethnicity, intellectual ability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status or other diversities.

3.71 Art therapists are encouraged to conduct a fair practice by avoiding cultural appropriation practices.

3.72 Through the development and implementation of their knowledge and skills in the multicultural field, art therapists are encouraged to develop appropriate and differentiated interventions by taking training programs and in their everyday practice.

CHAPTER IV: DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS THE PROFESSION

SECTION I: DEROGATORY ACTS

4.1 The following derogatory acts (i.e., unprofessional conduct) affect the honor or dignity of the profession:

1. insistently and repeatedly inducing a person to use one's professional services;
2. counseling or encouraging a client to commit an illegal or fraudulent act;
3. inability to maintain professional objectivity with the client, such as seeking romantic or sexual contact with the client and/or seeking to satisfy emotional needs within the established therapeutic relationship;
4. claiming fees for professional services not rendered or for a cancellation of the meeting occurring within the limits determined by the art therapist and the client as part of the therapeutic contract;
5. claiming a sum of money from a client for a professional service or part of a professional service, the cost of which is to be assumed by a third party, unless there is a formal agreement to that effect between the art therapist, the client and the third party;
6. issuing a receipt or other document falsely indicating that certain services were rendered;
7. invoicing a client for fees for meetings, explanations or supporting information given to the AATQ in the case of the client's complaint in the performance of the art therapist's duties;
8. communicating with a person submitting a complaint without the prior written permission of the AATQ when an investigation into the art therapist's professional conduct or competence is in progress.

The art therapist recognizes the AATQ's responsibility to inform and educate the public about the practice of art therapy by competent professionals. The art therapist also collaborates by:

9. informing the AATQ when they become aware that a person is usurping the title of art therapist or when the person is trying to make people believe that they carry this title when they should not;
10. informing the AATQ when there is reason to believe that an art therapist is professionally incompetent, unfit to practice or violating the AATQ's Ethical Standards and Code of Ethics.

SECTION II: PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

- 4.2** The art therapist shall promptly answer any correspondence from the AATQ or its representatives with respect to ethical standards.
- 4.3** The art therapist must demonstrate loyalty towards their colleagues by respecting the trust placed in them. They must not take credit for the work done by colleagues.
- 4.4** When consulted by a colleague, the art therapist must provide their opinions and recommendations within a reasonable time.
- 4.5** The art therapist who works in a multidisciplinary team or practices with other professionals must work in the best interest of the client and ensure that this collaboration does not cause the latter any harm.
- 4.6** The art therapist collaborating with other professionals must preserve their professional autonomy. They must refrain from performing tasks contrary to their professional ethics or the principles governing their professional practice. They must inform the AATQ of any pressure placed upon them while performing their professional activities.
- 4.7** The art therapist shall contribute to the development of the profession by sharing their professional knowledge and experience with colleagues and students. They shall also participate in ongoing training.

SECTION III: RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS

- 4.8** As a teacher, the art therapist must ensure that the syllabuses and lesson plan descriptions accurately represent the course topics, objectives and evaluation criteria.
- 4.9** As a teacher, the art therapist is aware that their personal values may affect the selection and presentation of didactic material. In their teaching, the art therapist must recognize and respect the different positions of the students, as long as these positions respect the ethical principles and rules of the AATQ.
- 4.10** As a supervisor and teacher, the art therapist must adhere to ethical standards and must ensure that students and interns know and understand these ethical standards.
- 4.11** As a supervisor and teacher, the art therapist must ensure that the supervised student performs tasks commensurate with the student's professional competence, academic training and experience.
- 4.12** The art therapist supervisor and the student must inform the client that the student is in training and under the supervision of a qualified professional.
- 4.13** The art therapist responsible for supervising a student must do so in accordance with the professional standards of the AATQ. The supervision involves the analysis, evaluation and implementation of experiences acquired with individual clients, groups and in private consultation.
- 4.14** The supervisor must provide at least one (1) hour of supervision per week to a student under their direction. Supervision rules are established by training programs.
- 4.15** The art therapy supervisor recognizes the limits of their own education, training and experience. The supervisor does not perform or claim to be able to perform supervisory tasks beyond their knowledge of art therapy.
- 4.16** The art therapy supervisor is responsible for maintaining the quality of their professional supervision skills and shall obtain consultation or supervision whenever appropriate.
- 4.17** The supervisor negotiates a clear agreement with each person they supervise. This agreement may contain, among other things, the following:
1. the supervision method;
 2. the type of clientele with which the student will work;
 3. the art therapy techniques that the student will use.
- 4.18** It is unethical to carry out the following practices in a supervisory context:

1. to attest to hours of art therapy experience that the student did not perform under the art therapist's supervision when they would have been entitled to receive them;
2. to give erroneous information about the competence of the student or the supervision the student received;
3. to not honour prior agreements about the nature and duration of supervision to be given to the student;
4. to engage in a therapeutic relationship with the supervised student;
5. to continue to supervise a student who deliberately violates ethical standards after receiving a fair and reasonable notice of the nature of the offense.

SECTION IV: PUBLIC STATEMENTS

4.19 Public statements and service offers of an art therapist are intended to adequately inform and enable the public to make informed choices about the art therapist's services. The art therapist shall accurately and objectively represent their qualifications, functions and professional affiliations. Art therapists are aware of the impact that their advertising can have on the associations or institutions with which they are associated.

4.20 The art therapist must always uphold professional standards when promoting their services.

4.21 The art therapist who uses public statements as a marketing tool must avoid the use of exaggeration or sensationalism.

4.22 The art therapist who gives public information and training sessions on art therapy procedures and techniques shall clearly indicate any restrictions that apply to the use of these procedures and techniques. The art therapist states a clear opinion that participation in a workshop does not make it appropriate for participants to call themselves art therapists or to use art therapy as a clinical or therapeutic tool in the treatment of their clients.

4.23 The art therapist must not publicly discredit any method or approach which is scientifically recognized in the field of intervention.

4.24 The art therapist who participates in the commercial distribution of instruments or products shall base their statements regarding benefits or effectiveness on professional or scientific data.

4.25 Advertising used by the art therapist must disclose their skills without exaggeration and without undue testimony about their competence and include the kind of services offered in art therapy. The information should be limited to the art therapist's name, highest academic degree conferred, date and type of certification, address, telephone number, office hours, a brief summary of the services and publications (conferences, research, books) if appropriate. Employers may list the names of staff members with their recognized qualifications.

4.26 In announcing the availability of art therapy services, only art therapists who are certified members of the AATQ may display affiliation with the Association by using the *ATPQ* certification. No organization or other individual may use the AATQ's logo to imply any endorsement or sponsorship of services without the written permission of the AATQ.

4.27 Advertisements of "personal growth groups" must make a clear statement of the purpose and the nature of experiences to be provided. The art therapist who offers them must share their academic and professional training as well as their experience in a precise and clear manner.

4.28 The art therapist must avoid participating in commercial advertisements recommending the use of a particular product or service associated with the practice.

4.29 No advertising shall denigrate, depreciate or devalue another art therapist or in any way negatively depict the abilities, skills or services of another art therapist.

4.30 Announcements or brochures describing workshops, seminars or other educational programs must accurately specify the eligibility requirements, educational objectives, the nature of material to be covered and any fee involved. These materials must also specify the academic and professional training and the experience of the participating art therapists.

4.31 The art therapist shall denounce any person who uses the professional qualifications of an art therapist or association to promote services or products in a manner that is not consistent with the ethical standards.

4.32 The art therapist shall differentiate art therapy services offered as part of a professional relationship from promotional interventions such as public lectures or demonstrations, newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programs, mail or other media.

SECTION V: STANDARDS OF USE OF ART THERAPY FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES

4.33 In every aspect regarding the administration, interpretation, and use of art therapy assessment procedures, as well as their publication and the information to be found in books and other literature related to such assessment procedures, the art therapist shall adhere to the standards and principles set forth elsewhere in this document.

4.34 Under no circumstances may the art therapist undertake an evaluation procedure without the client's knowledge and prior informed consent.

4.35 The art therapist must refrain from conducting assessments by correspondence unless an evaluative measure has been designed for this purpose.

4.36 The art therapist uses evaluation methods to tailor their services to the client's needs. Evaluation methods are used in a professional setting only and the client's confidentiality is respected.

4.37 The art therapist who uses evaluation methods is aware of the reliability, validity, standardization, margin of error and application methodology of these methods.

4.38 The art therapist who uses evaluation methods has acquired the skills required for them by supervised training.

4.39 The art therapist considers all factors that may alter the interpretation of results, such as culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability and education.

SECTION VI: INTERPRETATION OF ART THERAPY MATERIAL

4.40 The art therapist shall use caution in the interpretation of art therapy material, including artwork and interactions both within the therapeutic context and as part of assessment procedures.

4.41 In all professional reports, written or verbal, the art therapist shall restrict comments to the interpretation of the art therapy material related to the consultation and to their relevant conclusions and recommendations.

4.42 The art therapist shall avoid all possibility of false interpretation or erroneous use of the information they give to others.

4.43 The art therapist shall consider all factors that may influence their interpretations, such as culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and education. As well, the art therapist must be sensitive to their countertransference.

4.44 When possible, the client takes an active part in the symbolic exploration of art therapy material, and the interpretative conclusions are the result of a collaborative work between the client and the art therapist.

SECTION VII: PRECAUTIONS RELATING TO RESEARCH

4.45 Art therapy research projects and the participation of an art therapist in the research projects of others shall be evaluated in relation to the research's contribution to the field of art therapy and human welfare and in relation to the welfare of the participants in the research project. The art therapist will conduct the research with a constant respect for the dignity and well-being of the participants.

4.46 Before undertaking any research involving individuals, the art therapist shall obtain project approval from a research ethics committee that complies with the standards in force, including its composition and its operating procedures. If such a committee is not available, the art therapist ensures that the project complies with generally accepted standards in research ethics.

However, in the case of research undertaken in an establishment conforming to the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (Chapter S-5), the art therapist obtains the approval of the project by the committee of research ethics instituted by the Minister of Health and Social Services or by any other research ethics committee that complies with the standards in force, particularly in terms of its composition and its operating procedures.

4.47 Before undertaking a research project, the art therapist must evaluate the consequences for the participants. In particular, the art therapist must

1. ensure that all research collaborators are informed of their ethical obligations and share the art therapist's care for the respect of the human dignity of the participants;
2. obtain the written consent of any participant or their legal representative after having informed them, to the best of their knowledge of any risk involved in the research and any other aspect that may help the participant in making a decision concerning participation.

4.48 The art therapist shall be honest and frank in their dealings with research participants. If the methodology followed makes it imperative that certain aspects of the project not be disclosed immediately, the art therapist shall explain the reasons for this procedure as soon as possible at the end of the research.

4.49 The art therapist shall not coerce a person to take part in research or to continue to do so.

4.50 The art therapist shall exercise special care when undertaking an experiment during which a person's mental or physical health could be affected. The art therapist shall undertake no experiment that could have a permanent or serious harmful effect on a person.

4.51 The art therapist obtains consent from participants after informing them of all aspects of the research, including risks, if there are any.

In particular, the art therapist ensures:

1. that each participant or their legal representative has received relevant explanations about the nature of the research, its purpose, objectives and the benefits that would result from the provision of professional services, if needed. In the event that the purpose is concealed (to avoid biasing the results), it must be disclosed as soon as possible. The art therapist also explains the significant or unusual risks that the research presents and any other aspect likely to help the participant make the decision to participate in it;
2. that a free and informed written consent is obtained from the participant or, where applicable, from their legal representative, before participation in the research and during any significant change to the research in progress;
3. that each participant or, where applicable, their legal representative, be informed that they can verbally withdraw their consent at any time.

4.52 The art therapist respects the right of any person, whether minor or adult or legally incompetent, to consent to participate in the research, to refuse to participate in research or to cease to participate in it at any time.

4.53 Any information obtained about the research participant is confidential. When there is the possibility that others may obtain access to such information, the art therapist shall inform the participant and explain the measures taken to protect their information. Ethical standards for the conduct of research require that these explanations be provided to the participant prior to the signing of their consent forms in order to inform their decision.

4.54 Any acquisition of data derived from the research must be incidental to the research and must not be used for any personal purpose. The art therapist who undertakes or participates in a research project shall, where appropriate, declare their interests to the research ethics committee and disclose any real, apparent or potential conflict of interest.

APPENDIX

EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY ART THERAPY

The AATQ offers guidelines on educational and community art therapy in relation to ethical standards. These recommendations are based on “best practice” papers published by the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) as non-binding guidelines to help art therapists interpret and apply the ethical principles for art therapists.

Art therapists working in open studios or community and educational settings may find it challenging to precisely follow the ethical principles that seem more pertinent to clinical settings. Art therapists establish practices that respond to the expectations of their work environments, while respecting the spirit of ethical standards. Allen (1995) described the important role of the art therapist for structuring the open studio in order to ensure safety and facilitate creative expression in the service of healing.

Here are a few guidelines on educational and community art therapy:

Informed Consent: Art therapists hold an introductory conversation with participants to notify them about services offered, the art therapist’s role and qualifications, expectations of participation and applicable fees, if any. These guidelines, rules and regulations can be offered verbally or in writing. They may or may not be signed as a contract.

Designing Goals and Objectives: Educational and community art therapy is intended to advance health, well-being, social inclusion and community participation, as well as help participants articulate their own reasons for participation.

Confidentiality: Participants should be informed of the limits of confidentiality at the start of joining the studio. In some settings, there may be no expectations of confidentiality, such as in art education classrooms (Albert, 2010) or gatherings held in the context of public practice art therapy (Timm-Bottos, 2017). Whenever confidential information is provided to an art therapist working in a public setting, the art therapist must follow the main ethical guidelines regarding confidential information.

Art Usage and Storage: Participants are informed and must give their formal consent to the eventual use of their artwork in educational forums, exhibits and promotional materials. They are also made aware of how their artwork will be safeguarded, the duration of storage and process for respectful disposal.

References:

- Albert, R. (2010). Being both: an integrated model of art therapy and alternative art education. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 27(2), 90-95. doi : [10.1080/07421656.2010.10129713](https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2010.10129713)
- Allen, P. B. (1995). Coyote comes in from the cold: The evolution of the Open Studio concept. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 12(3), 161-166. doi : [10.1080/07421656.1995.10759153](https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.1995.10759153)
- Timm-Bottos, J. (2017). Public Practice Art Therapy: Enabling Spaces Across North America (La pratique publique de l'art-thérapie : des espaces habilitants partout en Amérique du Nord), *Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal*, 30:2, 94-99. doi : [10.1080/08322473.2017.1385215](https://doi.org/10.1080/08322473.2017.1385215)

NOTICE OF REVISION

The entire document ¹¹	revised August 2021
Chapter III, Section IV Articles 3.30	withdrawn and replaced June 2005
Chapter III, Section VII Articles 3.50	revised June 2005
Chapter IV, Section V Articles 4.1 (c) Articles 4.1 (d) Articles 4.1 (e)	revised June 2005 revised June 2005 withdrawn and replaced June 2005
Chapter IV, Section IV Articles 4.27 & 4.28	combined July 2001
Chapter IV, Section IV Articles 4.28 & 4.34	revised July 2001
Chapter IV, Section VII Articles 4.42.3 & 4.48	revised July 2001

¹ Detailed changes p. 17

AMENDED CHANGES - SEPTEMBER 2021

- Contributions and Table of Contents
- Preamble (including principles and values)
- Addition of the Appendix

Chapter I

Addition: Article 1.3

Chapter III,

- Section I: Additions: Articles 3.10 and 3.11
Reworking : Articles 3.2, 3.4 and 3.8
- Section II: Removal: Article 3.15
Reworking : Articles 3.13 and 3.14
- Section V: Combined : Article 3.25
- Section VI: Reworking : Articles 3.31, 3.38, 3.39, 3.40 and 3.41
- Section VII: Additions: Articles 3.42, 3.43, 3.44 and 3.45
- Section VIII: Addition: Article 3.55
Reworkings: 3.46, 3.47, 3.48, 3.52, 3.53 and 3.54
- Section XI: Additions: Articles 3.65, 3.66, 3.67, 3.68, 3.69, 3.70, 3.71 and 3.72

Chapter IV,

- Section II: Withdrawn: Article 4.7
- Section III: Withdrawn: Item 2 to Article 4.18
- Section IV: Reworking: 4.25 and 4.26
- Section V: Additions: Articles 4.36, 4.37, 4.38 and 4.39
- Section VI: Additions: Sections 4.43 and 4.44
- Section VII: Additions: Article 4.47
Withdrawn: Articles 4.52 and 4.53
Reworking: Sections 4.46 and 4.51