

CANADIAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION



SOCIÉTÉ  
CANADIENNE  
DE PSYCHOLOGIE

## Ethics Committee

February 2009

1. Attached to this report is a revised draft of the document “Ethical Guidelines for Supervision in Psychology: Teaching, Research, Practice, and Administration,” which the Committee on Ethics requests that the CPA Board of Directors consider for formal adoption at its February 2009 meeting. A draft of these guidelines was approved by the CPA Board in June 2008 for posting on the CPA website for a 90-day consultation period. A revised draft, which incorporated changes based on the consultation feedback, was presented to the CPA Board of Directors for adoption at its November 2008 meeting. At that time, the Board requested that further changes be made to the document. Those requests, and the resulting changes to the attached document, are as follows:

a. More attention to the gatekeeper role in the supervision of psychology students and trainees. Additional information about the gatekeeping role of supervision has been made in the Definitions. Reference to gatekeeping also has been included in one of the additional examples of application of the ethical decision-making model. (Three other references to gatekeeping in the Introduction were in the previous draft, as well as being included in the third definition of supervision.)

b. Recognition that opportunities for formal training in supervision are difficult to find outside supervision in clinical/counselling psychology. In response to this observation and request, changes have been made to the wording of the first paragraph of the Introduction regarding the need for maintenance of supervision knowledge and skills, and to guideline II.5.

c. Consider additional examples of applications of the ethical decision-making steps to ethical dilemmas. Three additional examples have been included. The examples now include one from each of the major groupings of vignettes: Teaching, Research, Practice, and Administration.

d. Consider removal of all the vignettes in the last section of the Appendix. This has not been done; rather, in the introduction to the Appendix, the process for creating the vignettes is explained, including the fact that the situations portrayed can occur anywhere, often are a blend of details from a variety of sources, and care has been taken to remove any identifiers. We believe that removal of the vignettes would be very unfortunate. There is considerable inter-disciplinary literature supporting the use of vignettes or case studies in developing ethical decision-making skills and understanding the complexity of ethical dilemmas. In addition, the use of realistic vignettes is an established practice in psychology as a means of learning to apply guidelines and standards at a practical level. CPA has been recognized as one of the leaders in this. Examples of CPA documents that include vignettes include the *Companion Manual to the Canadian Code of Ethics* (2001), the online CPA course *Being an Ethical Psychologist*, and the *Guidelines for Ethical Psychological Practice with Women* (2007). Examples of relevant literature outside of CPA can be found at the end of this report (p. 3). We are unaware of any legal action that has been taken anywhere in North America or Europe regarding the use of a case study or vignette in workshops or publications, in spite of their wide use.

2. The Committee is continuing to prepare Code Interpretations on the following topics, with expected presentation to the Board at its June meeting:

a. Psychological services to clients making end-of-life decisions.

b. “Ethical Guidelines for Psychologists Providing Psychological Services via Electronic Media.” Although approved in principle by the Board, when circulated for consultation, there was concern that the guidelines

were “too prescriptive”; however, enquiries continue to come in from CPA members and the public. The guidelines are being re-written as a Code Interpretation.

c. Use of titles and designations. This is an outstanding topic that did not seem to call for a set of guidelines. A brief Code Interpretation on this topic is being prepared.

3. Work continues on the development of materials/resources/procedures for the Ethics section of the CPA website.

4. The CPA web-based ethics course “Being an Ethical Psychologist” continues to be available and to receive positive feedback.

5. The Committee continued to respond to requests for consultation/advice/information from persons directed to the Chair by CPA head office.

6. No new ethics complaints have been forwarded to the Committee since its last report to the Board, and processes regarding all previously forwarded ethics complaints have been completed.

Carole Sinclair, Ph.D.  
Chair, CPA Committee on Ethics

Examples of non-CPA literature that uses vignettes/case studies:

- Cory, G., Cory, M.S., & Callanan, P. (1998). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company
- Falender, C., & Shafranske, P. (2008). *Casebook for clinical supervision: A competency based approach*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Fisher, C. (2003). *Decoding the ethics code: A practical guide for psychologists*. New York, NY: Sage Publications
- Hanson, S., Kerkhoff, T., & Bush, S. (2005). *Health care ethics for psychologists: A casebook*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Houser, R., Wilczenski, F., & Ham, M. (2006). *Culturally relevant ethical decision making in counseling*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Knapp, S., & Vandecreek, L. (2006). *Practical ethics for psychologists: A positive approach*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Koocher, G., & Keith-Spiegel, P. (2008). *Ethics in psychology and the mental health professions: Professional standards and cases (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Ladany, N., Friedlander, M., & Nelson, M. (2005). *Critical events in psychotherapy supervision: An interpersonal approach*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Lindsay, G., Koene, C., Ovreeide, H., & Lang, F. (2008). *Ethics for European psychologists*. Toronto, ON: Hogrefe & Huber
- Lowman, R. L. (Ed.). (2006). *The ethical practice of psychology in organizations (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Pope, K., & Vasquez, M. (2007). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling: A practical guide (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass
- Rave, E., & Larsen, C. (Eds.). (1995). *Ethical decision-making in therapy: Feminist perspectives*. New York: Guilford Press

- Sales, B. D., & Folkman, S. (Eds.). (2000). *Ethics in research with human participants*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Schultz, W. (2000). *Counselling ethics casebook (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)*. Ottawa: Canadian Counselling Association.
- Stark(-Adamec), C., & Pettifor, J. (1995). *Ethical decision-making for social scientists: Putting values into practice*. Ottawa: Social Sciences Federation of Canada
- Sue, D.W., & Sue, D. (1990). *Counseling the culturally different: Theory and practice*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons
- Truscott, D., & Crook, K. (2004). *Ethics for the practice of psychology in Canada*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press