

## ***Reiki Council Code of Conduct and Ethics***

This Code is intended for guidance and assistance to professional Reiki practitioners and to protect the interests of the public and their animals. It describes the standards of conduct and practice required of professional Reiki practitioners for people and animals. In order to be an 'Reiki practitioner for animals', one must first and at all times remain a Reiki practitioner and thus general points of professionalism will just refer to 'practitioner' as this includes animal practitioners too.

The purpose of this Code and its procedures is to ensure that any complaint made to the regulator is dealt with in a fair, clear and impartial manner.

A practitioner will agree to operate in accordance with the agreed Code of Ethics and Practice for Reiki and is expected to maintain high standards of care, competence and conduct.

This Code forms the basis upon which the conduct of any practitioner will be assessed in the event of a complaint, although it cannot cover every eventuality. Any concern raised to the regulator is to be dealt with in a fair, clear and impartial manner.

It is the responsibility of every practitioner to understand the content of this Code and to keep up-to-date with current legislation and local by-laws. Copies of this document are available on request and in English only. This Code is superseded by current legislation and by-laws.

### **The Code**

#### **Section 1**

##### KEY VALUES FOR PRACTICE

Every practitioner shall:

- a) give Reiki to his or her clients or animal clients with respect for their dignity, individual needs and values without discrimination
- b) be without judgement concerning race, colour, creed, gender or sexual orientation
- c) provide comprehensive and easy-to-understand information to allow clients to make informed choices relating to themselves or dependants for whom Reiki can be consented, including animals
- d) respect the client's right to choose his or her own forms and path of healing for themselves or dependants for whom Reiki can be consented, including animals
- e) act honestly and maintain professional integrity
- f) practise only within the boundaries of the practitioner's competence and qualifications
- g) acknowledge and respect all practitioners and disciplines
- h) work to foster and maintain the trust of clients (human and animal) and the general public

- i) keep all client information (including that of animals) confidential unless required by law to do otherwise
- j) comply with the Continuing Professional Development requirements of the Reiki Council specific regulators
- k) respond promptly and constructively to concerns, criticisms and complaints
- l) comply with relevant legislation
- m) respect medical and veterinary professionals and the complementary or supplementary role of Reiki in human or animal care respectively. Seek to work with these professionals where possible and appropriate.

NB. If a Reiki practitioner directly or indirectly, indicates, implies or knowingly allows others to assume that he or she is a Reiki practitioner for animals, then 'animal specific' Reiki level II training must have been successfully completed and valid. Current Reiki practitioner certification for working with animals must also be held, supported with appropriate insurance.

Additional values specific to working with animals (including birds and reptiles)

- a) Ask an animal for permission before offering Reiki
- b) Accept that when Reiki is offered to an animal it is shared in a two way partnership that requires compassion, confidence and an understanding of animals, in order to gain their trust.
- c) Respect an animal's choice to accept Reiki if, when, where and how the animal prefers – allowing space for the animal to move away, wander around as appropriate or block the Reiki energy flow if not desired.
- d) Recognise that sometimes an animal's issue may have arisen and be perpetuated by the owner's emotions or behaviours. Both may require Reiki for the issue to be fully addressed for long term benefit.
- e) Treat an animal's shared feelings (physical and/ or emotional), with the respect deserved, being professional, legal and appropriate at all times.
- f) Allow animals to be teachers where they wish to lead the Reiki session.

Section 2

THE CLIENT/PRACTITIONER RELATIONSHIP

2.1. Clarity of Contract

Every practitioner shall:

- a) display or make available relevant certificates or other qualifications
- b) ensure that the client or person responsible for human or animal dependants is always able to make informed choices regarding their healthcare
- c) give full and clear information either verbally or in writing about their services when commencing the Reiki treatment. This will include information about the nature of the

treatment, charges and confidentiality. Any revisions shall be agreed in advance of any change

- d) act with equal consideration whether being paid or in a voluntary capacity
- e) reach an agreement with the client or person responsible for human or animal dependants at the outset of the treatment if any additional therapy/ therapies are to be used in conjunction with Reiki
- f) retain the right to refuse or postpone the Reiki treatment to the client or their human or animal dependants provided that the practitioner makes the reason clear to the client:
  - i. if the practitioner is not able to treat for any reason
  - ii. if the client is under the influence of alcohol or mind-altering substances
  - iii. if the client behaves in any way which may lead the practitioner to feel physically unsafe, disrespected, or abused
  - iv. in the case of late attendance of the client
  - v. if an animal is not suitably located for the practitioners needs (eg snake or birds not housed in a cage or other closed containment if so desired by the practitioner, even if the animal is not a physical threat)
  - vi. if the animal is in clear need of urgent veterinary attention.

## **2.2. Informed consent**

The practitioner shall:

- a) ensure that voluntary and explicit informed consent has been given at all times by the client or person responsible for human or animal dependants
- b) recognise the client's right to refuse any part of the treatment for themselves, or their human or animal dependant or disregard advice
- c) gain written informed consent of a parent, guardian or relevant medical practitioner in the case of giving Reiki to a minor or animal and those without the mental capacity to decide for themselves. If no appropriate adult is physically present, then the written consent should specifically agree to this. However, the wishes of the person recipient must override any consent of a third party if they do not wish to receive Reiki
- d) only use video, audio recording or digital imagery of a client with clear, informed, written consent to the precise use of the material from the client or their human or animal dependant.

## **2.3. Confidentiality and record keeping**

Every practitioner shall:

- a) gather relevant personal information from the client about themselves or their human or animal dependant, including any relevant medical information. If appropriate the client shall be advised to consult his or her GP, take a dependent child to a GP or take an animal to a vet and this shall be recorded
- b) maintain full client records, including details of all treatments and advice, whether face-to-face or by phone, e-mail or letter

- c) ensure the records are honest, accurate and factual
- d) not disclose to a third party any information about a client, including the identity of the client, either during or after the lifetime of the client, without the consent of the client or the client's legal representative, (owner or carer in the case of an animal) unless it is required by due process of the law
- e) comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and current relevant legislation in regards to the storage of data. This includes registration and keeping client information secure and confidential unless otherwise required by law. Clients have rights of access to their health records and those of a human or animal dependant in accordance with the requirements of the law  
For more information see <http://gdpr-legislation.co.uk/>
- f) keep their records safe for at least seven years from the time of the last consultation
- g) be responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that any employee or agent adheres to confidentiality, and that any information relating to a client and those of a human or animal dependant is protected from improper use when it is received, stored, transmitted or disposed of
- h) only pass on the client's records to another practitioner where a client or the person responsible for the human or animal dependants has agreed to or requested this, and to complete the transfer as quickly as possible
- i) appoint a suitable person to undertake the proper security/disposal of all records in the event of any serious incapacity or death of the Reiki practitioner.

#### **2.4. Treatment in healthcare or animal care establishments and in the wider community**

- a) The healthcare or animal care establishment is responsible for the safety of its patients /residents /clients. The practitioner shall comply with the rules of the establishment.
- b) The establishment shall be informed that a patient/resident wishes to receive Reiki. In the case of animal care establishments, although the practitioner may feel that certain animals may benefit, it is for the staff and carers to agree for Reiki to be offered unless a more flexible agreement has been made for Reiki to be openly offered where it may help.
- c) When asked to work with animals with a physical health issue or sudden change in behaviour it would be prudent for the animal to have been seen by a veterinary surgeon for a diagnosis to be made prior to offering Reiki. The Veterinary Surgery Act of 1966 prohibits anyone other than a qualified veterinary surgeon from making a diagnosis of 'disease in' or 'injury to' animals, giving advice based on such a diagnosis or giving medical or surgical treatments. However, the healing of animals by contact healing, by the laying on of hands or distant healing is legal. In an emergency situation Reiki may be offered to an undiagnosed animal as first aid without veterinary consent for the purpose of relaxation until the vet arrives.
- d) Reiki shall be carried out with minimal interruption to other patients/residents/clients (human or animal) and staff.

- e) Practitioners shall not wear clothing, which gives the impression that they are a staff member, unless they are staff. They may have some form of identification such as a badge.
- f) The practitioner shall carry their current registration card or other relevant documentation.
- g) All the above apply equally when the practitioner gives Reiki in work places and all settings in which another carries overall responsibility.

### Section 3

#### PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

##### **3.1. Competence and Continuing Professional Development**

The practitioner shall:

- a) practise self-treatment and receive Reiki from another, as part of continuing self-development
- b) extend their knowledge through the use of Reiki treating themselves and others; also animals in the case of animal practitioners
- c) regularly review and evaluate the Reiki that he or she gives to a client (human or animal) and take any reasonable steps to advance their professional competence
- d) be aware of their own mental, emotional or physical health, and resolve any problems that may interfere with their ability to practise competently, and seek help as appropriate
- e) utilise mentoring, peer support or supervision services as necessary.

##### **3.2. Professional boundaries**

The Reiki practitioner shall:

- a) maintain the highest professional standard of relationships with clients, their human and animal dependants and other healthcare or animal care professionals. Care, skill and integrity shall be demonstrated at all times
- b) work in a co-operative manner with healthcare or animal care professionals and practitioners, recognising and respecting their particular contribution or lead
- c) not undermine a client's faith in any form of treatment or regime and respect the client's choices
- d) not encourage clients or persons responsible for human or animal dependants away from professional colleagues
- e) not exploit their clients financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way. The Reiki practitioner will not undertake any form of sexual activity/relationship with a client in their care
- f) state that Reiki does not require the removal of clothing
- g) not offer Reiki in place of conventional medical or veterinary treatment

- h) never give a diagnosis of a medical or veterinary condition to a client or a representative for a human or animal dependant in any circumstances as part of the practice of Reiki
- i) never prescribe or sell remedies and health or veterinary products as part of the practice of Reiki
- j) not countermand instructions or prescriptions given by a doctor or vet. It must be left to the client or person responsible for human or animal dependants to make his/her own decision in the light of medical or veterinary advice. Reiki practitioners shall refer the client back to their medical advisor if the client asks them for any medical advice, or the representative of an animal to a vet in the case of veterinary advice
- k) be aware of their own professional limitations and work only within their own scope of practice, referring clients elsewhere if /when the need arises.

### **3.3. Potential misrepresentation**

- a) Practitioners shall not use titles or descriptions suggesting medical, veterinary, academic or educational qualifications, unless they possess them. They must not mislead the client into believing that they are a medical doctor or that they are a veterinary surgeon unless they are legally recognised as such within the country they are practising. Those possessing doctorates in other subjects whilst using the title of doctor must make clear that they are not medical doctors.
- b) Reference to assistants as 'Nurse', is not acceptable unless the individual concerned is registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and employed in the capacity of a nurse or a Registered Veterinary Nurse.
- c) Claims, whether explicit or implied, verbally or in writing, implying cure of any named disease must be avoided.

### **3.4. Advertising and Media**

Original 3.4a) omitted

- a) Advertising shall be factual and not seek to mislead or deceive, or make unrealistic or extravagant claims. Advertising may indicate special interests but must not make claims of superiority or discredit any professional colleagues or Reiki.
- b) Advertising content and the way it is distributed shall not put prospective clients under pressure.
- c) No registered member may use his or her registration status in the commercial endorsement of any product, remedy or service other than Reiki.

### **3.5. Premises**

The practitioner shall:

- a) comply with national and local legal regulations regarding premises and the safety of staff and client facilities. If animals are offered Reiki on the practitioner's premises any relevant legislation and guidance must also be followed

- b) review facilities and working practices on a regular basis to ensure they comply with current health and safety standards
- c) be aware of his or her responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation (Health & Safety Act 1974) whether employer, employee or self-employed.

### 3.6. Insurance

The practitioner shall:

- a) have a current insurance policy that states provision for public liability, professional indemnity and if relevant employee liability
- b) if practising from their home, inform their household insurers, to ensure adequate cover for their clients
- c) if professionally offering Reiki to animals on a paid basis, it must be checked that insurance cover includes animal treatments.

### 3.7. Research

- a) Before starting any research, practitioners must be familiar with and abide by current research ethics requirements, statutory obligations regarding research and research governance.

### 3.8 Disclosure obligations

- a) the practitioner shall immediately inform a regulator of any misconduct, lack of competence, drug, child or animal abuse or fraud offences, pending legal actions or actual convictions. Decisions will be made in the light of the circumstances in each case.

## Section 4

### CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAW

#### 4.1. Obligations under the Criminal and Civil Law

- a) the practitioner shall comply with the criminal and civil law of the UK
- b) the practitioner shall observe and keep up to date with all legislation and regulations
- c) **Working with a minor**  
The practitioner shall seek a signature from a parent or a guardian of a child under the age of 16 on the following statement:  
*"I have been advised by.... (Reiki practitioner's name) that according to law, I must consult a medical doctor concerning the health of my child... (Child's name) "*  
This statement should be signed and dated by both the parent/guardian and the practitioner and kept with the client's records.
- d) **Suicide**  
It is not against the law for an individual to commit suicide or to attempt to commit suicide (Suicide Act 1961). However, the law states that anyone, either a professional or lay person can be charged with the offence of aiding and abetting a suicide in the following circumstances: if they actively assist a suicide, if they are aware of someone's decision to

attempt suicide and do not inform an appropriate professional, e.g. the general practitioner, hospital psychiatrist or approved social worker

e) **Notifiable Diseases**

Be aware of those diseases, which are notifiable under the current Public Health (Control of Disease and Infectious diseases) Act, and take appropriate action in these cases. Please refer to the Department of Health. If a therapist is aware or has any concerns that their client may be suffering from a notifiable disease they should refuse treatment and insist that the client sees a doctor, as it only a medical professional who is qualified to make such a diagnosis. They should also notify the Medical Officer of Health in their area

For a list of notifiable diseases see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/notifications-of-infectious-diseases-noids>

For Animals

Be aware of those diseases, which are notifiable under the current Animal Welfare Act 2006 and take appropriate action in these cases. Please refer to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). If a therapist is aware or has any concerns that the animal may be suffering from a notifiable disease, they should refuse face-to-face treatment

For a list of notifiable diseases see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/notifiable-diseases-in-animals>

f) **Red Flag Symptoms**

Be aware of red flag symptoms when a doctor should be called

Be aware of animal red flag symptoms when a vet should be called.

## 4.2 Disclosure

Disclosure shall only be made to the appropriate authorities, if they are required by law or by order of a court, in the case:

- a) that there is a serious risk of suicide by an individual. It **is** better to get the client's consent to break confidentiality and to keep the information disclosed to the minimum. If however a practitioner cannot secure a client's consent, the practitioner is still under legal obligation to seek other help and this should be explained to the client
- b) that the practitioner is directed to disclose the information by any official having a legal power to order disclosure
- c) that an individual intends to harm or abuse a child, vulnerable adult or animal. Where there is a legal obligation to inform the authorities, the parent, animal owner or guardian does not need to be informed that you are doing this. The welfare of a child, vulnerable adult or animal is always paramount
- d) of any terrorist activity
- e) that the practitioner is obliged to record in writing the reasons for any such disclosure.

*NB.* Where the practitioner is working as part of a larger team, for example within an Institution or through a multidisciplinary or similar clinical or veterinary approach, or where the client has been



referred by a medical advisor or agency with conditions placed on the referral as to shared disclosure by the practitioner to the advisor or agency, then provided that it is clear that the client or person responsible for the human or animal dependant consents, confidential information may be shared by the practitioner with the team or referring advisor or agency.

## **Section 5**

### **Complaint and arbitration procedures**

The primary concern of a complaint and arbitration procedures is to protect the public and animals at large.

A regulator will encourage the resolution of differences between practitioners and potential complainants. This can be done through informal mediation before entering into a formal complaint procedure.

Misunderstandings and the breakdown of communication are the major causes of complaints. There may be some areas where there is no absolute right or wrong, in which case the Code of Ethics and Practice will offer guidance and indicates areas where particular challenges may arise. When in doubt, practitioners are encouraged to seek advice from the regulator with whom they are registered, or the association to whom they belong, if not registered with a regulator.

Members of the public should be aware, that to pursue a complaint against a practitioner who doesn't belong to a professional association or who is not registered with a regulator, should take their grievance to their local trading standards.