



IMA moots ethics code overhaul

Posted at: 08/09/2018

Highlights

- Marking a bold departure from the existing code of ethics that covers the medical profession, the IMA — an umbrella voluntary body that counts more than 2.5 lakh, or about a third, of the country's doctors as its members — is in the process of redefining the code in order to ensure a more contemporary outlook.
- The current code of medical ethics by the Medical Council of India dates back to 2002.
- The IMA would be releasing a handbook on the redefined code of medical ethics to its members at the association's annual cultural festival in Pune this weekend.
- The code would subsequently be submitted to all the relevant Central Ministries - health, medical education, law and justice and the MCI - for consideration.

Code of medical ethics

- The handbook would comprise 24 topics that either need to be reviewed or find no mention in the current code.
- For example, the current MCI norms do **not allow doctors to publicise their practice through** any type of **advertising**.
- Adding that the IMA believes that any **publicity material should be ethical and approved** after scrutiny by the respective State medical councils.
- IMA's handbook also looks at the topic of '**end of life**'.
 - After much discussion, IMA is of a view that **doctors cannot give consent** for deciding on pulling the plug.
 - It is against physician-assisted suicide. This **decision can only be taken by relatives**.
- **Ethical issues around Assisted Reproductive Technology** and surrogacy also find a mention in the handbook and the IMA states that doctors should ethically ensure that surrogates and egg donors are not exploited.
- The IMA also recommends that **cadaver organ donations must be made compulsory** for all unless an individual specifically states that he or she does not want to become an organ donor.
- India carries out a high number of living donor transplants as compared to cadaver organ donations.

A revamp has been due for long.

Indian Medical Association (IMA)

- Indian Medical Association is the only **representative, national voluntary organisation of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine**, which looks

after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large.

Objectives:

- **To promote and advance** medical and allied sciences in all their different branches and to promote the improvement of public health and medical education in India .
- **To maintain the honor** and dignity and to uphold the interest of the medical profession and to promote co-operation amongst the members thereof.
- **To work for the abolition** of compartmentalism in medical education, medical services and registration in the country and this to achieve equality among all members of the profession.

Working:

- The general control management and direction of the policy of the Association is vested in the '**Central Council**' to which local branches send representatives and which meets once a year to lay down policies.
- It **delegates its powers to a Working Committee** (A representative body of all state Branches) for implementation of programmes and activities.
- This committee meets at least three times a year to execute various activities for welfare of members and the people in matters of health.

The Hindu

