

Ethics in Medical Physics: The AAPM perspective

Jerry White, M.S.

Immediate Past Chair, AAPM Ethics Committee

Conflicts of Interest

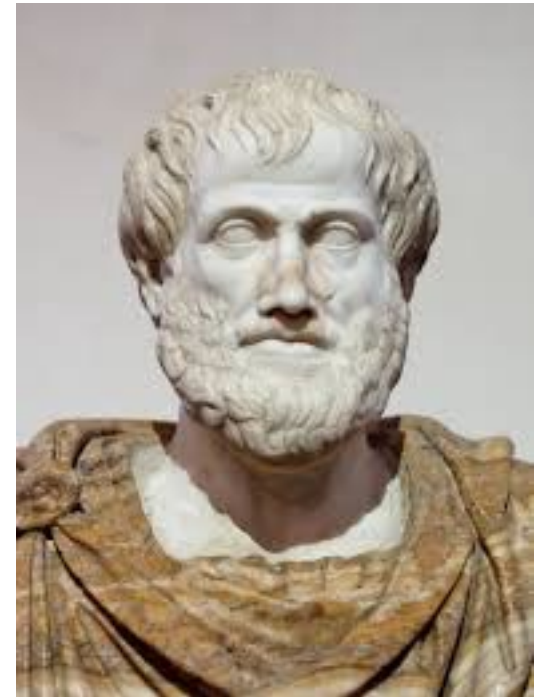
- I have no conflicts to report

Objectives:

- Understand the role of the Code of Ethics and the Ethics Committee within the AAPM
- Review the underlying philosophy, structure and content of the Code

“Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good...”

Opening sentence of *Nicomachean Ethics*; Aristotle, 340 BCE.



Review of the current AAPM Code of Ethics

- Establishes a shared expectation of professional behavior
- Distinct from civil, moral or religious law
- Behavioral – making “right” choices
- Transactional – right relationship with others
- Personal – discipline, awareness and responsibility

Review of the current AAPM Code of Ethics

- Establishes a shared expectation of professional behavior
 - Principles
 - Guidelines
- Distinct from civil, moral or religious law
- Behavioral – making “right” choices
- Transactional – right relationship with others
- Personal – discipline, awareness and responsibility
- ~~Aspirational~~

Policy Acknowledgement



I agree to abide by the AAPM Code of Ethics and AAPM Code of Conduct at Meetings and Social Events.

Decline

Agree



COLORADO ASSOCIATES MEDICAL PHYSICS

Collegial Approach



Patients first, but mutual collegiality is heavily weighted

Focus is on Professional activity

Role of the Committee:

- Administration
- Education
- Advice
- Complaint Review

Not Our Way



Advisory Role

- Informal and Formal

Complaint Review

Adjudication

- Sanctions

Other Behavioral Imperatives of Interest to U.S. Medical Physicists

- State Licensure
- State Registration
- American Board of Radiology
- Professional Organizations (ASTRO, ACR, etc.)

Peculiarities of the U.S. medical system that may raise ethical conundrums:

- Competitive institutions/employers
- Non-disclosure agreements
- Non-competition agreements
- Resource allocation based on profitability/marketing
- Excessive cost to patients
- Failure to enable universal access to healthcare