

**Ethical Aspects of Dental Practice Arrangements**  
**Statement of the ADA Council on Ethics, Bylaws, and Judicial Affairs**

The dental profession is continually challenged today to maintain its high ethical standards in the face of changes in the dental marketplace. The ethical statements subscribed to by the profession place the patient's welfare above any other consideration. Although the method of health care delivery may change, the overriding duty of the dentist will always be to provide quality care in a competent and timely manner.

Dentists who enter into practice arrangements with third parties may be called upon to reconcile the business demands of these arrangements with the needs of their patients. Dentists must not allow these demands to interfere with the patient's right to select a treatment option based on informed consent. Nor should dentists allow such demands to interfere with the free exercise of their professional judgment or their duty to make appropriate referrals if indicated. Dentists are reminded that business obligations do not excuse them from their professional duty to put the patient's welfare first.

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