

## **PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS PERTAINING TO INCOMPETENCE, IMPAIRMENT OR UNETHICAL CONDUCT OF LICENSEES**

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It is the position of the North Carolina Board of Chiropractic Examiners that its licensees have a professional obligation to act when confronted with an impaired or incompetent colleague or one who has engaged in unethical conduct.

When appropriate, an offer of personal assistance to the colleague may be the most compassionate and effective intervention. When this would not be appropriate or sufficient to address the problem, licensees have a duty to report the matter to the institution best positioned to deal with the problem. *For example, impaired licensees should be reported to the Board office.* Incompetent licensees should be reported to the clinical authority empowered to take appropriate action. Licensees also may report to the North Carolina Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and when there is no other institution reasonably likely to be able to deal with the problem, this will be the only way of discharging the duty to report.

This duty is subordinate to the duty to maintain patient confidences. In other words, when the colleague is a patient or when matters concerning a colleague are brought to the licensee's attention by a patient, the licensee must give appropriate consideration to preserving the patient's confidences in deciding whether to report the colleague.