

Physicians reminded of ethical obligations regarding torture

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(HealthDay)—With the issuing of the new U.S. Senate report on interrogations, the American Medical Association (AMA) is reminding physicians of their ethical obligations relating to torture and interrogation.

As part of the AMA *Code of Medical Ethics*, physicians must oppose and must not participate in [torture](#), including providing or withholding services, substances, or knowledge to facilitate practice of torture; should only treat individuals when it is in the patient's best interest, and not to verify health so that torture can occur; and should help provide support for victims of torture. Furthermore, during interrogation, physicians should avoid being involved in use of coercion.

Under the *Code of Medical Ethics* Opinion E-2.0.68, physicians have five [ethical obligations](#): (1) to perform physical and mental assessments of detainees only to determine if there is a need for [medical care](#) and provide this care; (2) not to participate in interrogations; (3) not to monitor interrogations; (4) not to participate in developing effective interrogation strategies; and (5) to report their observations to the appropriate authorities.

"We firmly believe that U.S. policies on detainee treatment must comport with the AMA's *Code of Medical Ethics* and the World Medical Association's Declaration of Tokyo, which forcefully state medicine's opposition to torture or coercive interrogation and prohibit physician participation in such activities," AMA President Robert M. Wah, M.D., said in a statement.

More information: [News Release](#)
[AMA Statement](#)

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