



Professionalism



Learning Objectives

- At the completion of this session, the learner will be able to
- Define professionalism
 - Identify the ACGME General Competency of Professionalism
 - Describe key professional attributes
 - Recognize common examples of unprofessional behavior
 - Differentiate among learners with behavioral problems to identify those at risk for future problems with the state board
 - Understand common methods to incorporate the teaching of professionalism into a course curriculum



Clinical Competencies

- Medical Knowledge
- Patient Care
- Communication Skills
- **Professionalism**
- Practice-based Learning
- Systems-based Practice



Professionalism

**Most
important of
the clinical
competencies**





Threats To Professionalism



- Non-homogeneous professional group
- Better informed public
- The skeptical public
- Failed self-regulation
- Healthcare delivery system changes
- Modern technology
- Managed care
- The marketplace

Defining Professionalism

- ACP
- ABIM
- EFIM
- ACS
- AMA
- AAMC





Definition

- Special code of behavior (attitudes, values, and commitments) - a higher standard!!!
- Moral imperative to put the people you serve above your own self interest.



"profession" is, today, almost synonymous with occupation



6. Under present circumstances, students become cynical about the profession of medicine – indeed, may see cynicism as intrinsic to medicine - because they see us ‘say one thing and do another.’
7. Additional courses on ‘medical professionalism’ are unlikely to fundamentally alter this regrettable circumstance. Instead, we will actually have to change our behaviors, our institutions, and our selves.

Why young people do NOT want to be doctors?

- Mirror image of business cycle
- Loss of autonomy
- Declining physician income
- Loss of respect



Jordan Cohen MD

AAMC Annual Meeting Address 2001



Today's Realities

- Admission process
 - ↑ emphasis on *GPA* and *MCAT*
 - ↓ emphasis on personal characteristics
 - Altruism
 - Leadership
 - Commitment to self-sacrifice
 - Empathy
 - Fervor for social justice
- Acculturation process
 - Dehumanizing demands





Vanquishing Virtue: The Impact of Medical Education

Jack Coulehan, MD, MPH, and Peter C. Williams, JD, PhD

Acad Med 2001;76:598- 605

When I arrived in medical school, I was eager to get involved. I was excited about addressing important issues because, as medical students, I was sure that we would have some clout and certainly a commitment to the well-being of others . . . However, **medical school is an utter drain.** For two years lecturers parade up and down describing their own particular niche as if it were the most important thing for a student to learn. And then **during the clinical years, life is brutal.** People are rude, the hours are long, and there is always a test at the end of the rotation. . . . After a while I reasoned that the most important thing I could do for my patients, for my fellow human beings, for the future of medicine, as well as for me, was to assure myself some peaceful time. I made a point of hoarding my extra time for simple pleasures. I had read Perri Klass' novel in which she describes how physicians must re-learn the ability to appreciate the mundane. Her point is that **physicians must regain their humanity after completing their training.** For my part, I tried not to lose it, or at least to hold onto it as long as possible. So, rather than thinking arrogantly that I could improve the lives and souls of others, I decided to focus more on my own life. I figured that I would then be better equipped for dealing with human situations faced by a physician in patient encounters. . . .





Characteristics of Professionals

Robin Downie

- Skills or expertise proceeding from a broad knowledge base.
- Service based with those whom he/she serves.
- Social function of speaking out on broad matters of public policy and justice.
- Independent of the influence of the State or commerce.
- Educated rather than trained. This means having a wide cognitive perspective, seeing the place of his or her skills within that perspective and continuing to develop this knowledge and skills within a frame work of values.
- Legitimized authority - independent, disciplined by its professional association, actively expanding its knowledge base and concerned with the education of its members.



**autonomy is the
characteristic central to
professionalism**



Elements of Professionalism

- Altruism - *best interest of patients*
- Accountability - doctor patient relationship and health care needs of public
- Excellence - *commitment to life-long learning*
- Duty - *available and responsive, "commitment to serve"*
- Honor and integrity - *fair, truthful, and straightforward*
- Respect for others

Desirable professional attributes



- Humility
- Honesty
 - Intellectual
 - Personal



Desirable professional attributes

- Responsible
- Reliable
- Accountable
- Balance between home & work
- Attention to personal health



Desirable professional attributes

- Altruistic
- Respectful
- Loyal



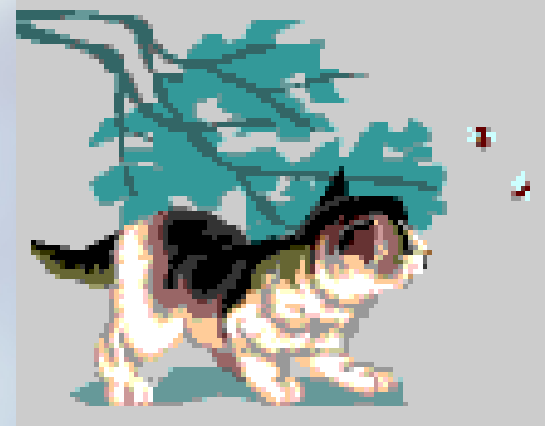


Desirable professional attributes

- Commitment to excellence
- Commitment to self-directed learning
- Compassion
- Sensitivity
- Tactfulness

Desirable professional attributes

- Intellectual curiosity
- Insightful into weaknesses and strengths
- Mature





Teaching Professionalism

Most everything you need to know
about professionalism you should
have learned in kindergarten & from
Dad and Mom!



Situated Learning Theory

- Cognitive Base

- Authentic learning





Professionalism: Situated Learning Theory

"Attempts to bridge the gap between 'know what' and 'know how' by embedding learning in authentic activities, helping to transform knowledge from the abstract and theoretical to the useable and useful."

Richard Cruess, MD

Teaching Professionalism: Theory, Principles and Practices
Clinical Orthopaedics & Related Research, 2006 (449), 177-185

A person wearing a white surgical mask and a blue hairnet, looking down. The background is a blurred blue and white.

Traits of Authentic Activities

- Higher order thinking
- Depth of knowledge
- Applicable to their world
- Allows interaction and sharing of ideas
- Social support for student achievement



What Have Others Done?

- New courses: ethics, communication skills, the humanities
- More creative methods: Problem based learning, case-based teaching
- Role modeling
- Development of narrative competence: journaling and diaries



What Have Others Done?

- Service oriented learning
- Case vignettes
- Ethics OSCE
- Role-playing sessions in small groups
- Development of student personal ethics codes
- Early Concern Notes



What Have Others Done?

- Case-based student workshops
- Art and multimedia
- Museum visits
- Small group discussions
- A shared professional framework for an anatomy course
- Development of safe venues for personal narratives and reflection



"Trainees must experience professionalism as a bundle of continuous narratives, either observed directly through role model physicians or indirectly through stories and films."

Jack Coulehan

Today's Professionalism: Engaging the Mind but not the Heart
Academic Medicine 80(10), October 2005, 892-898



Teaching Professionalism

We can not change the basic personality and nature of young adults - hopefully we can modify behavior.





Assessing Professionalism

Lack of professionalism
is like pornography:
we may not be able to
define it precisely,
but we all know what
it is when we see it!





Impact of Unprofessional Behavior

Papadakis - 1999 and 2005

- Reviewed the disciplinary action by licensing boards as it relates to prior behavior in medical school
 - Physicians who were disciplined by state medical-licensing boards were three times as likely to have displayed unprofessional behavior in medical school
 - IM, Family Medicine, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Pediatrics and Surgery were the most common specialties with difficulties
 - No gender differences
 - Students who were most irresponsible were 8 times more likely than controls to have future disciplinary action with the board



Examples of Unprofessional Behavior

- Dishonesty
- Arrogance (sense of entitlement)
- Prejudice
- Lack of respect
 - Patients
 - Colleagues





Examples of Unprofessional Behavior

- Lack of accountability for medical errors and oversights
- Fiscal irresponsibility
- Lack of commitment to life long learning
- Lack of due diligence
 - Lazy
 - Carelessness



Examples of Unprofessional Behavior

- Personal excesses
 - Alcohol
 - Substance abuse
 - Gambling
- Sexual misconduct





Assessment

“Professionalism can be taught and assessed through lectures, small-group seminars, role-playing exercises, directed reading, and one-on-one observation and counseling. However, the most effective way of teaching professionalism is for instructors to **model appropriate behavior** and to impose a consistent policy of zero tolerance for unprofessional behavior.”



Assessment of Professionalism

- Punctuality
- Consistency
- Dress
- Respectful interactions
- Respect for diversity
- Willingness to accept responsibility
- Willingness to seek help when in difficulty
- Communication with patients
- Dependability & availability

Be aware of your surroundings



Team Work





Summary



Professionalism

- Single most important of the clinical competencies
- Lack of professional behavior, in turn, is the single most common cause for disciplinary action
- Desirable professional attributes include humility, honesty, responsibility, reliability, and accountability. The ability to preserve an appropriate balance between patient care responsibilities and personal commitments. Altruism, respectfulness, loyalty, compassion, sensitivity, and tactfulness are other desirable professional attributes.
- Heightened sense of intellectual curiosity, insight into personal strengths and weaknesses, maturity, and commitment to clinical excellence and self-directed learning.



Declaration of Professional Responsibility

- Humanity is faced with unprecedented threats to its health and well-being
- While these threats are new, physicians' response is guided by their historical commitment to care for the sick and the suffering
- A recommitment to professionalism underscores it as the foundation for the public's trust in medicine



Professionalism aspires to
altruism, accountability,
excellence, duty, service,
honor, integrity, and
respect for others!!!