PROFESSIONALISM

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Objectives

• Understand that ‘professionalism’ has become a dominant concern in medical practice
• Unpick what is meant by profession, professional and professionalism
• Be familiar with the characteristics and components of professionalism
Profession

Job
**Profession**

- Vocation based on specialized educational training.
- Regulated by governing body
- May require the person to pass regulating exam (qualified in the profession).
- The person may or may not be required to undertake regulated training, or internship.
- For example: a doctor who has to study for a number of years, pass the boards & complete a residency.

**Job**

- Activities that are performed in exchange of a monetary value
- Short-term & only done as a person requires money to live.
- Jobs don’t make a significant impact to society of the person’s life
- If a person is unhappy with a job, they tend to move on to a better one.
Profession

Professional

Professionalism
Profession is a field of study whereas a professional is a person who undertakes a profession.

- Vocational, occupation, or career based on specialized educational training regulated by a governing body. They may require the person to pass a regulating exam if qualified in the profession.
- May or not be required to undertake regulated training or internship.
- For example, a doctor needs to study for many years, pass the boards, and complete a residency before he can be qualified as a doctor.
- Is viewed as an individual who is gainfully a part of a profession. He/she is also proficient, skilled, and has specialized knowledge & training in it.
- Is qualified, certified, or licensed by a competent authority in a particular profession.
What is Professionalism?
Definition

Principles of professionalism entail not only personal commitment to the welfare of the patient but also collective effort to improve the health care system for welfare of society. Hafferty

“the physician to serve the interests of the patient above his or her self-interest”
ABIM

Broadly speaking, ethics concerns itself with why and how one ought to act.
Candiles
Professionalism is

The habitual & judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values, & reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual & community being served (Estein & Hundert)

Epstein RM, Hundert EM. Defining & assessing Professional Competence. JAMA, 2002; 287(2): 228-235
Professionalism and Ethics
The Same or Different?
Professionalism and Ethics
The Same or Different?

• Ethical principles are a body of statements developed to guide practitioner behavior primarily for the benefit of the patient & for society (AMA).
• They define the essentials of honorable behavior for the practitioner.
• They are standards or guides – not laws
• Having a body of ethical standards developed by the profession is one of the things that separates professionals from journeymen
AMA Medical Ethics

A physician shall…provide

• **competent** medical care, with **compassion and respect**,  
• **uphold the standards** of professionalism, be **honest** (&) report physicians deficient in character or competence;  
• **respect the law**,  
• **respect the rights** of patients, colleagues, and other health professionals,
AMA Medical Ethics

A physician shall…provide

• continue to *study*, apply, & *advance scientific knowledge*, maintain a *commitment to medical education,*

• recognize a responsibility to participate in activities *contribution* to the *improvement of the community,*

• regard responsibility to the *patient as paramount,*

• support *access to medical care for all people.*
Professionalism, why does it matter?

- Impression of you & of the profession
- Credibility
- Improved relationships (Healthcare team, Patients)
- Career security
Components of Professionalism

- Respectful
- Compassionate
- Honest
- Considers the needs of others
- Recognizes & accepts responsibility for errors
Attributes of Professionalism

- Subordinate own interests to those of others
- Adhere to high ethical & moral standards
- Respond to societal needs
- Evince core humanistic values
Attributes of Professionalism

- Exercise accountability for themselves & colleagues
- Demonstrate a continuing commitment to excellence
- Reflect upon their actions & decision
Attitudes & Behaviors that Detract from Professionalism

- Complaining
  - Inappropriate dress
  - Disrespectful
    - Know-it-all
  - Obnoxious
    - selfish
  - Self-centered,
- Negative attitude
  - Non-team player
  - Uncaring
  - Indifferent

HOW?
How to Evaluate Professionalism?

Implement Culture change

Performing Assessments

Setting Expectation

Remediating appropriate behavior

Professionalism with your patients

- Respect
- Compassion
- Concern for privacy
- Empathy
- Do not provide misinformation
- Active listening
- Remembering
- Patient’s perspective
- Understanding
- Helpful
Professionalism with your peers

- Be supportive
- Help problem solve (Bounce ideas off of each other)
- Share experiences
Professionalism with your other healthcare team

Keep the goal in mind...patient care & optimal therapeutic outcomes

Never let ego get in the way of providing patient care

Keep “perspective” in mind – Preceptors, attendings, residents, med students, nurses, etc.

Be respectful – “Pre Round” – Know your patient’s issues – Know their labs, vitals, meds, etc

Be resourceful – If don’t know, look it up, & get RIGHT BACK to them
– Have a sense of “ownership” for your team & patients
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<tr>
<th>What is Not!!!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
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<td>Arrogance and disrespectfulness</td>
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<td>Prejudice</td>
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<td>Abrasive interactions</td>
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<td>Lack of accountability</td>
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<td>Fiscal irresponsibility</td>
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<td>Lack of commitment to self-learning</td>
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<td>Lack of due diligence</td>
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<td>Personal excesses</td>
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<td>Sexual misconduct</td>
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Final Thoughts

• Professionalism is an ongoing process
  • It matters
References

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