



# PROFESSIONALISM

FACULTY OF MEDICINE



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba brought together faculty members from various departments and schools within the Faculty to focus on the issue of professionalism. The various constituent groups were well represented and included faculty members from clinical and basic science departments, department heads, medical students and residents, Associate and Assistant Deans of Medicine, and faculty/staff from the department of Medical Education and from the School of Medical Rehabilitation.

The purpose of the consultation was to engage members of the Faculty of Medicine in a discussion about how best to describe 'professionalism' and begin the development of a professionalism document. Although this document may seem primarily geared towards physicians, the intent is that constituents within the Faculty of Medicine will use this as a template to develop discipline-specific guidelines.

It is envisioned that this professionalism document will be an inspirational or aspirational text. The document is intended to provide a framework and set of principles within the programs and departments of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba; and to guide the actions of professionals in their practices and the actions of learners at all levels as they prepare for independent careers.

This document will provide guiding principles for both individuals and programs to use in promoting and supporting professional behaviour within programs and departments of the Faculty of Medicine. It is not meant as a disciplinary document and does not replace existing policies and procedures regarding professional behaviour. It is also not meant to replace competency-based training objectives, but can be used to supplement teaching regarding professionalism and professional behaviour.

This document is intended for use by all members of the Faculty of Medicine, staff (support and managerial), faculty members (clinical, basic medical sciences and educational), residents, and students (undergraduate and graduate).



Brian Postl MD  
DEAN, FACULTY OF MEDICINE



Samia Barakat MD FRCPC  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, PROFESSIONALISM,  
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

*“Professionalism in medicine requires the physician to serve the interests of the patient (and community) above his or her self-interest. Professionalism aspires to altruism, accountability, excellence, duty, honour, integrity, and respect for other.” ABIM*

## PROFESSIONALISM:

To fully describe professionalism, an understanding of the idea of ‘professional practice’ is necessary. Four anchoring components exist for professional practice and provide a foundation on which professionalism can be based:

- The professional works within a social context and has social responsibilities;
- The professional must have knowledge and skill in medical/professional competence (e.g. a unique body of knowledge);
- The professional respects the primacy of the professional/practitioner – patient (or student) relationship; and
- Professionalism is part of all aspects of work and personal life.

## PROFESSIONALISM IN ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCES INSTITUTIONS

In professional schools, the professional identity of learners evolves, including the learners in Medical School and in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Respiratory Therapy in the School of Medical Rehabilitation. Roles and context-specific behavioral norms shift as learners move through their training program. Therefore, expectations regarding desired professional behaviour and its ‘evolution’ during training should be explicit for both faculty and learners. In fact, professional expectations have moved to centre stage in many schools. For example, first-year students in the Faculty of Medicine begin their medical education/career with a white coat ceremony in which they accept the professional meaning of responsibility that comes with wearing the white coat. By reciting the Hippocratic Oath, they promise to fulfill the expectations for caring and professionalism.

The critical role of faculty members in promoting professional behaviours in learners cannot be overstated. An environment that supports the formal curriculum by actively modeling professional behaviour, and also provides opportunities for learners to process, discuss or debrief unprofessional behaviours that they may have experienced, is critical for promoting professional behaviours in both learners and faculty.



The educational and practice environments for many health professional faculty have historically evolved since their entry into practice several years earlier. Interprofessional practice, health care teams, quality improvement and innovation, and competency-based training are all realities our health professionals must embrace in order to provide safe and effective care. It is within these changing and diverse contexts that professionalism is demonstrated.

## MEDICAL PROFESSIONALISM

In its publication "*Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium: A Physician Charter*" ([www.abimfoundation.org](http://www.abimfoundation.org)), the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation describes professionalism as "the basis of medicine's contract with society" and requires that physicians place the interests of patients above their own, that physicians set and maintain standards of competence and integrity, as well as provide expert advice to society on matters of health. Patients, colleagues, and the general public expect that physicians remain primarily professional and caring.

Participants in the Professionalism retreat on agreed that the principles and commitments articulated in the ABIM document reflected those of the group, and could be adapted to the environment at the University of Manitoba:

- Primacy of patient welfare
- Patient autonomy
- Social justice

They form the foundation for the commitment to professionalism. The principles were broadly grouped into four commitments by participants in the retreat:

- Responsibility to patients
- Responsibility to society (including the health care system)
- Responsibility to the profession
- Responsibility to self

## COMMITMENTS:

### Responsibility to patient:

- **Commitment/accountability for professional competence**  
Individual commitment to lifelong learning and responsibility for maintaining medical/clinical knowledge and team skills necessary for the provision of quality care. Also, the profession as a whole must strive to see that all of its members are competent and must ensure that appropriate mechanisms are available for physicians to accomplish this goal.
- **Commitment/accountability for honesty with patients**  
Honesty to patients at all stages of treatment and care, including when errors occur.
- **Commitment/accountability for patient confidentiality**  
Appropriate confidentiality safeguards should be applied to disclosure of patient information.
- **Commitment/accountability for appropriate relations with patients**  
Physicians should never exploit the vulnerability and dependency of patients for personal gains.
- **Commitment/accountability for positive, non-judgmental and empathic communication.**

### Responsibility to society (including health care system):

- **Commitment/accountability for improving quality of care**  
This entails not only maintaining clinical competence but also working collaboratively with other professionals to reduce medical error, improve patient safety, promote efficient use of health care resources, support innovation and optimize the outcomes of care.
- **Commitment/accountability for improving access to care**  
Physicians must strive to reduce barriers to equitable health care based on education, laws, finances, geography, and social discrimination.
- **Commitment/accountability for a just distribution of finite resources**  
Appropriate health care should be provided based on cost-effective management of limited clinical resources.
- **Commitment/accountability for inter and intra professional collaboration**
- **Commitment/accountability for behaviour that reflects the values of the profession.**



### Responsibility to profession:

- **Commitment/accountability for maintaining trust by managing conflict of interest**

Physicians have an obligation to recognize, disclose to the general public, and deal with conflicts of interest arising in the course of their professional interactions with for-profit industries.

- **Commitment/accountability for scientific knowledge**

Physicians have a duty to uphold scientific standards, to promote peer reviewed research and to create new knowledge.

- **Commitment/accountability for professional responsibilities**

Physicians must support profession-led regulation and act in ways that demonstrate they are worthy of the trust that society has bestowed upon them. They must interact with others in ways that are respectful, collegial, and enhance patient care. This includes the following concepts:

- Collaboration and collegiality
- Profession-led regulation (self-governance)
- Maintaining professional standards
- Internal and external assessment

### Responsibility to self:

- Commitment/accountability for life long learning
- Commitment/accountability for self care: to avoid burnout, and manage stress
- Commitment/accountability for balance between personal and work life

## PROFESSIONALISM WITHIN FACULTY OF MEDICINE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Graduate programs within the Faculty of Medicine encompass professional and research-based degrees. Graduate students constitute a unique population within the Faculty of Medicine and contribute to the overall mission of the institution. The principles of professional behavior and responsibilities are consistent for all learners within the Faculty of Medicine. However, differences exist in the contexts within which professionalism is expressed based on the educational program pursued and the level of patient interaction encountered.

Professionalism for graduate students must take into account the various relationships and contexts within which graduate students work. These include relationships with program advisors, patients and peers. Graduate students must also demonstrate professional behaviours in their research activities, which include behaviours related to collection and analysis of research data, and health information, all of which can occur without direct patient interaction.

## SUMMARY

This document represents a broad articulation of the ideals associated with professional behaviour within the Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba. Faculty, learners, and staff are expected to maintain these ideals through their actions, behaviour, and interactions. In maintaining high standards for professional behaviour, we reflect the ongoing commitment to society, to patients, to the profession, and to ourselves.

Professionalism at the Faculty of Medicine is grounded in the professional behavior of all its members at all times and reflects the commitment to leadership by the Faculty of Medicine as the prime institution for medical research and education in the Province of Manitoba.



PROFESSIONALISM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

**Dr. Samia Barakat**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN,  
PROFESSIONALISM, CHAIR

**Dr. J. Dean Sandham**  
FORMER DEAN,  
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

**Ms Veena Agrawal**  
MANITOBA MEDICAL  
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Ms Beth Beaupré**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOINT  
OPERATING DIVISION

**Ms Kyla Caners**  
MANITOBA MEDICAL  
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Dr. Barry Cohen**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
INTERNAL MEDICINE

**Dr. Heather Dean**  
ASSISTANT DEAN,  
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

**Dr. José François**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN,  
CONTINUING MEDICAL  
EDUCATION

**Dr. Aviva Goldberg**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
PEDIATRICS, ETHICS

**Ms Joanne Hamilton**  
MEDICAL EDUCATION

**Dr. Gary Harding**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
INTERNAL MEDICINE, ETHICS

**Dr. Eric Jacobsohn**  
HEAD, ANESTHESIA

**Dr. Thomas Klonisch**  
HEAD, HUMAN ANATOMY  
& CELL SCIENCE

**Dr. Bruce Martin**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN,  
UNDERGRADUATE  
MEDICAL EDUCATION

**Mr. Kaif Pardhan**  
MANITOBA MEDICAL  
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Dr. Merril Pauls**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
EMERGENCY MEDICINE,  
ETHICS & HUMANITIES

**Dr. Malathi Raghavan**  
ACADEMIC LEAD,  
EVALUATION UGME

**Dr. Ira Ripstein**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN,  
POSTGRADUATE  
MEDICAL EDUCATION

**Dr. Ross Stimpson**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
SURGERY

**Dr. Anna Ziomek**  
COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS  
& SURGEONS OF MANITOBA

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS

**Mr. Matthew Alkana**  
MANITOBA MEDICAL  
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

**Dr. David Ames**  
RESIDENT

**Dr. Patricia Baker**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
PATHOLOGY

**Dr. Jamie Boyd**  
HEAD, FAMILY MEDICINE

**Dr. Tamara Buchel**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
FAMILY MEDICINE

**Dr. Margaret Burnett**  
PROFESSOR, OBSTETRICS  
& GYNECOLOGY

**Dr. Krystin Campbell**  
RESIDENT

**Dr. Patrick Choy**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, DEVELOPMENT

**Ms Sarah Clarke**  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

**Dr. Andrew Czarnecki**  
RESIDENT

**Dr. Murray Enns**  
HEAD, PSYCHIATRY

**Dr. Emily Etcheverry**  
DIRECTOR, SMR, ASSOCIATE  
DEAN, ALLIED HEALTH

**Dr. Wil Fleisher**  
MEDICAL EDUCATION

**Ms Moni Fricke**  
INSTRUCTOR, PHYSICAL  
THERAPY

**Dr. John Gartner**  
HEAD, PATHOLOGY

**Dr. Ruby Grymonpre**  
PROFESSOR, PHARMACY

**Dr. Karen Humphreys**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
INTERNAL MEDICINE

**Ms Corrine Isaac**  
PSYCHIATRY

**Dr. Danny Klass**  
CPSO

**Dr. Ed Kroeger**  
ASSISTANT DEAN, RESEARCH

**Ms Meaghan Labine**  
GRADUATE STUDENT

**Dr. Robert McIlwraith**  
HEAD, CLINICAL HEALTH  
PSYCHOLOGY

**Dr. Diane Moddemann**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
PEDIATRICS

**Dr. Margaret Morris**  
HEAD, OBSTETRICS  
& GYNECOLOGY

**Dr. Grant Pierce**  
ASSISTANT DEAN, RESEARCH

**Mr. Bram Ramjiawan**  
RESEARCH INNOVATION,  
& REGULATORY AFFAIRS

**Dr. Dan Roberts**  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, ACADEMIC  
AFFAIRS & INNOVATION,  
HEAD, INTERNAL MEDICINE

**Dr. Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg**  
HEAD, PEDIATRICS

**Dr. Kurt Skakum**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
PSYCHIATRY

**Ms Theresa Sullivan**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

**Dr. Michael Teschuk**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
CLINICAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

**Dr. Kenneth Van Ameyde**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
INTERNAL MEDICINE

**Ms Pam Wener**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

