TG#11: Professionalism
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Assignment: Professionalism is a part of all aspects of health care practitioner’s life, defined for physicians as the “basis of medicine’s contract with society”, and as such must be imbedded in all aspects of the UGME curriculum. A component of this includes identifying and addressing the hidden curriculum, defined as what the students learn outside the formal curriculum that affects their learning, professional interactions and clinical practice. This TG will develop strategies to address and incorporate all aspects of professionalism, hidden curriculum and medical ethics and humanities into the UGME curriculum.

Keywords: professionalism, medical ethics, medical humanities, and hidden curriculum.
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Professionalism TG - Synopsis

- defined as the “basis of medicine’s contract with society”
- must be imbedded in all aspects of the UGME curriculum
- includes identifying and addressing the hidden curriculum
- will develop strategies to address and incorporate all aspects of professionalism, hidden curriculum and medical ethics and humanities into the UGME curriculum.
Understanding Professionalism

- Those attitudes and actions that allow physicians to earn and maintain the trust of their patients – (McKnight)

- Faculty Professionalism Statement
  - works within a social context and has social responsibilities
  - must have the knowledge and skill to perform competently/act professionally
  - respects the primacy of the physician-patient (or student) relationship
  - Professionalism is part of all aspects of work and personal life
Working Definition

- Physicians subordinate their own interests to the interests of others
- Physicians adhere to high ethical and moral standards
- Physician respond to societal needs, and their behaviors reflect a social contract with the communities served
- Physicians evince core humanistic values, including honesty and integrity, caring and compassion, altruism and empathy, respect for others, and trustworthiness
Working Definition

- Physicians exercise accountability for themselves and for their colleagues
- Physicians demonstrate a continuing commitment to excellence
- Physicians exhibit a commitment to scholarship and to advancing their field
- Physicians deal with high levels of complexity and uncertainty
- Physicians reflect upon their actions and decisions

Teaching Professionalism – Themes

- Integration
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• Integration

• Collaboration with communication skills
Teaching Professionalism – Themes

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- Establish core content
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- Progression through clinical training
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- Role-modeling
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• Reflection and self-assessment
Teaching Professionalism – Themes

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- Establish core content
- Progression through clinical training
- Role-modeling
- Reflection and self-assessment
- Addressing the learning environment
Teaching Professionalism

- Professionalism
- Clinical Ethics
- Health Law
- Medical Humanities
- Communication Skills
- Community and Public Health
- Patient Safety
Evaluation

• What’s happening nationally or internationally?
  • Some recurring themes but no consistent or uniform approaches
  • No formal guidelines developed/accepted for undergraduate medical education

• How to best integrate into a new curriculum?
  • Current assessment have limitations but some progress made in:
    • Understanding and defining the construct
    • Developing and testing assessment tools for reliability, validity, and feasibility to support their interpretation and use
Purpose of Assessment (“Why?”)

- Purpose of the assessment
  - Influences selection of assessment methods and instruments and how they are applied and interpreted
- Serve formative and summative functions
  - Sets standards and expectations
  - Source of feedback
  - Track students’ progress
  - Assess competence
Professionalism is a complex, multi-dimensional, integrated construct

Core professionalism/ethics/law content and knowledge base

Focus on "observable behaviours"

- Attitudes and values are exceedingly difficult to measure
- Assumes behaviours at least in part reflect underlying dimensions of professionalism (interaction of cognitive & attitudinal elements & personality with environment)
- Highly context dependent--must take into account context and institutional culture’s effects on students and assessors

“What” to Assess
“How” to Assess

- Select instruments to assess level of training—appropriate knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours
- Combination of multiple assessment methods over a period of time & triangulation of these assessments—because it is a multi-dimensional construct
- Useful to think in terms of a “comprehensive program of assessment”
“How” to Assess

- Written examinations
- Direct observation
  - Classroom or tutorial assessments
  - Ward assessments
  - Standardized clinical encounters
  - Clinical encounters
- Multisource (360-degree) evaluations
- Portfolios and reflective pieces
- Critical incident reports
Assessment of Professionalism

- Selecting and Training Raters (“Who?”)
  - Select based on their opportunity to observe selected behaviours
  - Training incl. frame of reference & behaviour observation training, & providing feedback

- Timing of Assessments (“When”?)
  - Continue throughout continuum of medical education
  - Increasing the number of observations can improve reliability—assessment should be longitudinal, frequent, and continuous

- Settings to Assess Professionalism (“Where”)
  - In all locations related to students’ education
  - Variety of contexts is important—assessments in different contexts over time are better than single assessment or unchanging contexts
Summary

• Building on a strong base

• Teaching
  • integration
  • communication
  • core content
  • progressive
  • role-modeling
  • reflective
  • learning environment
Summary

• Multi-dimensional constructs require multi-modal assessments
  • Best conceptualized as an assessment “program” rather than an individual, generalizable test

• Clinical assessments focus on observable behaviours
  • Multiple observations by multiple observers over time in varying contexts improve the accuracy of assessments

• Frequent and structured (formative) feedback is needed for students’ development in addition to summative evaluations