Professionalism, Teacher-Learner Conduct, Mistreatment & Safety

LCME Standard MS-31 states that medical schools must ensure that the learning environment for medical students promotes the development of explicit and appropriate professional attributes in their medical students in the context of the school’s mission and the community in which it operates.

Standard MS-32 requires each medical school to define and publicize the standards of conduct for the teacher-learner relationship, and develop written policies for addressing violations of those standards. Mechanisms for reporting violations of these standards -- such as incidents of harassment or abuse -- should ensure that they can be registered and investigated without fear of retaliation.

MS-31 addresses the number of ways in which professionalism is advanced in the medical school:

- The professionalism webpage on the UGME website identifies the professional attributes expected of medical students. The webpage contains information regarding The Hippocratic Oath, the U of M Charter, and the Faculty’s expectations of students regarding professional behavior.
  http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/education/undergraduate/professionalism.html

- All students attend professionalism sessions in their Orientation Week and through the ethics and professionalism curriculum in their Pre-Clerkship years.

- In 2008, an Associate Dean for Professionalism, Dr. Samia Barakat, was appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. She has developed a Professionalism Working Group that includes faculty, residents, and students. Through an extensive and consultative process this group has led the drafting of a Charter of Professionalism that has been adopted throughout the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine and has served to make faculty leaders, faculty, residents, and students more aware of the foundations of professionalism in medicine and their own responsibilities in this area.
  http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/media/Professionalism_Brochure_low_res_revised.pdf

Dr. Barakat has also spear-headed the development of a variety of policies for the Faculty of Medicine that relate to issues of professionalism and professional behavior. These include policies on attendance at scheduled classes by Pre-Clerkship students, professional attire, and acting professionally when engaged in online activities.
http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/education/undergraduate/professionalism.html

MS-32
The Faculty of Medicine initiated a process to develop and adopt a specific policy on the Teacher-Learner Relationship in the Spring of 2010. After broad consultation with all learners, faculty, administrative and support staff, a Guideline was presented to, and approved by Faculty Executive Council in November 2010. The University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine,
“Guidelines for Conduct in Teacher-Learner Relationships” document is available on faculty website:
http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/media/guidelinesforconductinteacherlearnerrelationships.pdf

The Guidelines for Conduct in Teacher-Learner identifies procedures not only for reporting, but also investigating and addressing incidents of student mistreatment.

There are additional approaches for reporting by students and this includes any of the following: contacting the Student Advocacy of Student Affairs of the University of Manitoba; contacting the Associate Dean, Students or Associate Dean, Professionalism and Diversity as identified on the “Speak Up …“cards identified above; or submitting an expression of concern to a centrally located confidential professionalism “drop box.”

Student Affairs has added a section to their Wellness web page regarding mistreatment, including how to identify it, prevent it, report it, and assist in resolving it when it occurs. http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/student_affairs/wellness_hub.html

A monitoring program for medical student mistreatment has recently been developed. The survey conducted at the end of all clinical rotations in clerkship includes specific questions about mistreatment.

To avoid or prevent medical student mistreatment the Faculty of Medicine developed, disseminated, and held broad and open discussion regarding the Guidelines for Conduct in Teacher-Learner Relationships. The Faculty has addressed the concerns regarding medical student mistreatment within the student body, as well as extensively with faculty and administrators of partner institutions including affiliated teaching hospitals. It is anticipated that this will assist in preventing mistreatment, addressing it appropriately when it is reported, and undertaking continued surveillance of the learning environment.