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laboratory medicine.*

PEARLS OF LABORATORY MEDICINE

Medical Professionalism

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Professionalism

“The skill, good judgment, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well”

Miriam-Webster Dictionary



Professionalism: How to conduct yourself at work

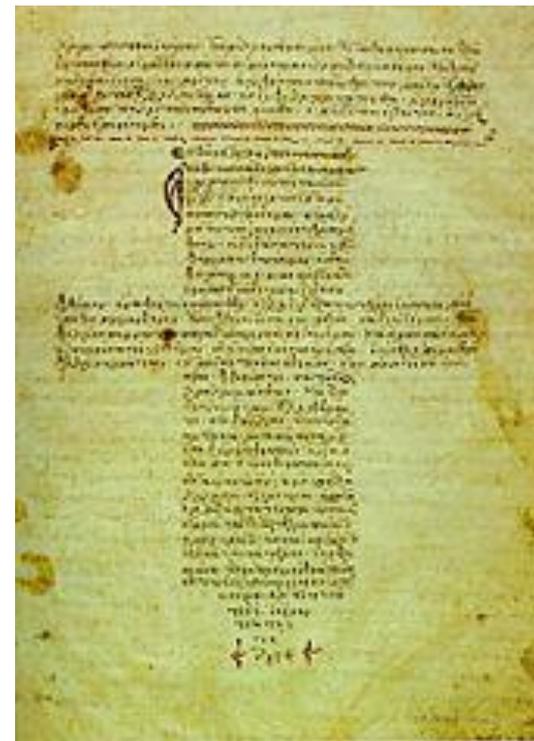
- Make being on time a priority
- Don't be a grump
- Dress appropriately
- Watch your mouth
- Offer to help colleagues
- Don't gossip
- Try to stay positive
- Don't hide from your mistakes
- Always fight fair
- Don't lie
- Don't air your dirty laundry

<http://careerplanning.about.com/od/workplacesurvival/a/professionalism.htm>



Medical Professionalism

- Medical professionalism can be traced to Hippocratic Oath
- Written in ~400 BC by Hippocrates
- Pledge taken by physicians to uphold specific ethical standards



A 12th-century Byzantine manuscript of the Oath

Medical Professionalism

Professionalism is the basis of medicine's contract with society

“The fundamental principles are:

- (1) the primacy of patient welfare;*
- (2) patient autonomy;*
- (3) social justice.”*

A Physician Charter: Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium.

Issued jointly by ABIM, ACOP, EFIM

Ann Int Med 2002;136:243-246.

Ten Professional Responsibilities

Commitment to:

- Professional competence
- Honesty with patients
- Patient confidentiality
- Maintaining appropriate relations with patients
- Improving quality of care
- Improving access to care
- Just distribution of finite resources
- Scientific knowledge
- Maintain trust by managing conflicts of interest
- Professional responsibilities

Ann Int Med 2002;136:243-246.



Professionalism Norms	% Respondents	
	Agree with norms	
Professional competence	77%	
Honesty with patients	85%	
Patient confidentiality	Not queried	
Maintaining appropriate relations with patients	91%	
Improving quality of care	93 & 98%	
Improving access to care	93 & 86%	
Just distribution of finite resources	98%	
Scientific knowledge	83%	
Maintain trust by managing conflicts of interest	96%	
Professional responsibilities	96 & 93%	

Campbell et al. Ann Int Med 2007;147:795-802

Professionalism Norms	% Respondents	
	Agree with norms	Conform to norms
Professional competence	77%	33 & 88%
Honesty with patients	85%	97 & 99%
Patient confidentiality	Not queried	89%
Maintaining appropriate relations with patients	91%	Not queried
Improving quality of care	93 & 98%	53, 56 & 85%
Improving access to care	93 & 86%	69 & 74%
Just distribution of finite resources	98%	25 & 64%
Scientific knowledge	83%	10 & 41%
Maintain trust by managing conflicts of interest	96%	76%
Professional responsibilities	96 & 93%	54 & 55%

Campbell et al. Ann Int Med 2007;147:795-802

ACGME Professionalism Requirements

"Residents must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles.

Residents are expected to demonstrate:

- 1) compassion, integrity, and respect for others;
- 2) responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest;
- 3) respect for patient privacy and autonomy;
- 4) accountability to patients, society and the profession;
- 5) sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities, and sexual orientation"

ACGME Common Program Requirements. Revised 2013.

Linking Professionalism Values to Specific Behaviors

Requirements	Behaviors
Compassion, integrity, respect for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't make inappropriate demands • Is not abusive and critical in times of stress
Responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens well • Is patient • Is sensitive to physical/emotional needs
Respect for patient privacy & autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains patient confidentiality
Accountability to patients, society & the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows through on tasks • Arrives on time • Accepts blame for failure • Is not hostile, derogatory, sarcastic • Is not loud or disruptive • Not overly confident • Accepts constructive criticism • Seeks new knowledge
Sensitivity & responsiveness to a diverse population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is not biased/discriminatory

Modified from Kirk LM. Proc (Bayl Univ Med Cent) 2007;20:13–16

ACGME Milestone Reporting

Milestones	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Licensing, certification, examinations, credentialing: Demonstrates attitudes & practices that ensures timely completion of required examinations and licensures					
Demonstrates honesty, integrity & ethical behavior					
Demonstrates responsibility & follow-through on tasks					
Gives & receives feedback					
Demonstrates responsiveness to each patient's unique characteristics and needs					
Demonstrates personal responsibility to maintain emotional, physical and mental health					

ACGME Pathology Milestone Group. Revised 2013



Professionalism in Training Programs

Ron Domen, M.D.

Penn State Hershey Medical Center & College of Medicine

Surveyed 3 groups:

- Penn State Pathology Department faculty & key supervisors
- Pathology program directors nationwide
- Penn State program directors and coordinators

Two questions were asked:

- What are desirable professional/ethical attributes?
- Provide examples of unprofessional/unethical behavior.

25 responses were received

Courtesy of Ron Domen, M.D. Penn State University



Professionalism in Training Programs

Desirable professional/ethical attributes:

- Honesty
- Trustworthy
- Integrity
- Respect (towards self, others, colleagues, patients)
- Accountability/taking responsibility
- Dependability/reliability
- Effective interpersonal communication skills
- Knowing limitations & when to ask for help
- Maintaining confidentiality

Courtesy of Ron Domen, M.D. Penn State University



Most Common Unprofessional Resident Behaviors

- Inappropriate comments about fellow employees (21%)
- Poor attendance/tardiness (21%)
- Being disrespectful to support staff (21%)
- Dishonesty (21%)
- Not attending conferences (17%)

Domen RE et al. Academic Pathology 2015;1:1-9



Professionalism in Training Programs

Select examples of unprofessional/unethical behavior

- Blaming others (or the system) when you are responsible (wholly or in part) for not finishing a task or assignment or for making a mistake
- Denigrating others (usually out of lack of confidence or jealousy)
- Being rude to secretaries, technologists
- Losing your temper in front of colleagues or those working under you
- Gossiping about colleagues
- Dressing inappropriately for work
- Blatantly ignoring the rules, acting superior to regulations
- Not admitting ignorance and not seeking help when appropriate
- Leaving others to clean up your mess – physical or otherwise
- Not doing the job you are paid to do (e.g., disappearing or “checking out” after boards)

Courtesy of Ron Domen, M.D. Penn State University



Professionalism in Training Programs

Select examples of unprofessional/unethical behavior

- Wasting time during work hours surfing the internet or playing on one's phone – You have a responsibility to become an outstanding pathologist. Patients are relying on you.
- Setting a bad example for more junior residents. Taking short cuts that could compromise patient care.
- Unexcused absences
- Not attending mandatory lectures without good reason
- Not taking responsibilities seriously. Tasks like looking up clinical history, pulling previous slides are not scut-work. These are important elements of providing a comprehensive pathology interpretation.
- Not focusing on your current rotation, getting drawn into other activities to the detriment of your current responsibilities

There are many more examples – I'm sure you can think of some

Courtesy of Ron Domen, M.D. Penn State University



What Should Be Done When Residents Exhibit Unprofessional Behavior?

Assessment and Management of Professionalism Issues in Pathology Residency Training: Results From Surveys and a Workshop by the Graduate Medical Education Committee of the College of American Pathologists

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Professionalism and Social Media

Physicians should weigh a number of considerations when maintaining a presence online:

- Patient privacy & confidentiality
- Use privacy settings
- Maintain appropriate boundaries of the patient-physician relationship
- Separate personal & professional content online
- When physicians see unprofessional content they have a responsibility to bring it to the attention of the individual
- Actions conducted via social media may have professional unintended consequences

AMA Opinion 9.124 (2011) Professionalism in the use of social media



Summary

Professionalism:

- Important in every profession, but particularly important in medicine
- Linked to ethics & the Hippocratic Oath
- ABIM, ACOP, & EFIM published a charter with principles and responsibilities
- Survey indicates physicians support these principles
- Residents are responsible for these same principles
- Physicians need to be cautious in their use of social media

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