Creating & Evaluating a Program in Professionalism For Medical Residents

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A Simple Definition of *Professionalism*:

- The non-technical virtues and practices that typify the caring and competent physician, including the placement of patient interest above self interest.
What is a Profession?

- It is a learned art in the spirit of public servitude
- It requires high standards of knowledge & performance
- Regulates itself through a social contract with society
- It contributes to a common good.
- It is not only a calling, but a career
Traditional Professions of the Western World

- Civil Service
- Military - Officers
- Clergy
- Law
- Medicine
Why the Current Interest in Professionalism?

- Desire by medical organizations to emphasize and return to the core moral values and behaviors that should typify the medical professional, and the profession.
Contemporary Trends Have Compromised Those values & Behavior

- a market place & politically driven health care system
- varying quality of care and medical error in practice
- conflicts of interest in medical practice (ie, drug company payments)
- inappropriate relations with patients, families and other professionals
Contemporary Trends…

- fraudulent billing & financial exploitation of patients
- misrepresentation of experience & credentials (practitioners and residents)
- inequity in health care availability and distribution
- recognition of demands of training
Elements of Professionalism in Medicine (ABIM Project)

- Altruism
- Accountability
- Excellence
- Duty
- Honor & Integrity
- Respect for Others
Disciplines Related to Professionalism

- Medical Ethics
- Medical Humanities
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Professional Etiquette
- Medical Law
Medical Organizations that have Embraced Professionalism Education

- American Board of Internal Medicine (Certifying Exam)
- American College of Physicians (ACP Project Professionalism)
- American Medical Association (AMA Code Of Ethics)
Medical Organizations...

- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- Core Competencies Include Professionalism
- AIM-ACP-ASIM-European Federation of Internal Medicine
  (Charter on Medical Professionalism)
Key Components of the Professionalism Curriculum in the Department of Medicine, UTHSCH

- Didactic knowledge of key issues and concepts using both large & small group interaction
- A component of Physician as professional and Person
- An evaluation system
Core Topics Presented in Large Group Forums for the Year

- Introduction to concepts of professionalism and the curriculum
- Ethical and professional issues in emergency care
- Truth telling with patients and professionals
- Issues of confidentiality
- Respect for patients: autonomy and competency
- Professional dilemmas in the care of the AIDS patient
- Issues in conflict of interest
Core Topics ...(cont.)

- Dilemmas in boundary issues surrounding patient and professional relations
- Physician stress, burnout and impairment; diagnosis, treatment and prevention
- Maximizing physician well being
- Managing medical error
- Ethical issues in end-of-life care; limiting care, physician assisted suicide and euthanasia
Modalities for Presentation of Content Curriculum

- **Medical Grand Rounds**
  - 3 to four presentations per year

- **Noon Lecture Series**
  - Monthly series- primarily residents

- **Medical Clinic Lecture Series**
  - 1-2 interactive small group presentations

- **Topics in Emergency Care Series**
  - Annual presentations to all beginning residents.
Modalities for Presentation of Content Curriculum

- **Professionalism Morning Report**
  - Monthly interactive session with selected case scenarios, typically under the theme

- **Professionalism CPC**
  - Case analysis in CPC format with ethical & professional issues dominating

- **Other Educational Forums**
  - House-staff association meetings
The Curriculum for Physicians as Person and professional

- Core lecture series in physician stress, burnout and impairment, including identification & Rx
- **Introduction of EAP** based program for Physician well-being focusing upon counseling and services (financial, marital, child-rearing)
- **University program** for the identification & treatment of impaired residents with EAP & local medical association services.
Ways to Evaluate Professional Attitudes and Behavior

- Monthly evaluations by attending physicians
- Twice annual feedback sessions by program directors—now include professionalism & well-being
- Annual evaluation by peers
- Feedback from simulated patients
Evaluating Clinical & Professional Skills with Standardized Patients

- Trail with 10 residents with unannounced and unknown SPs presenting to clinic as ‘new patients’
- SPs evaluate the residents’ skills in history taking, physical examination and professional attitude and performance
- Later “group” educational feedback provided - eventually will have individual feedback & grade
Addressing Deficiencies

- **Education**
  - Uncovered during faculty and director evaluations - core curriculum

- **Remediation**
  - Assigned course-work & reevaluation

- **Termination**