

PROFESSIONALISM PROGRAM
Faculty of Medicine. University of Ottawa
January, 2005

Medicine is considered to be the classic example of a profession. The term Professionalism embraces a set of attitudes, skills and behaviours that is, the attributes and values expected from those to whom society has extended the privilege of being considered a Professional.

The Faculty has adopted a **DECLARATION of PROFESSIONALISM** which sets forth these attributes, including

- ❖ HONESTY & INTEGRITY
- ❖ ALTRUISM & RESPECT
- ❖ RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY
- ❖ COMPASSION & EMPATHY
- ❖ DEDICATION & SELF-IMPROVEMENT

HONESTY & INTEGRITY

Physicians are expected to interact with all people and to deal in all situations with complete honesty and integrity. This includes learning sessions, examinations, clinical duties, the medical record, all evaluations, and all research activities.

ALTRUISM & RESPECT

Altruism means putting the needs of the patient first and foremost, and before one's own. Respect includes respect for the patient, regardless of race, religion, age and gender, and also respect for all members of the health care team.

RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Responsibility includes knowing what is best for the patient, within the limits of your competence and in the context of all the medical & legal standards of patient care. Accountability means fulfilling the obligations expected of you.

COMPASSION & EMPATHY

Physicians are expected to be empathetic and compassionate to those who are ill and their families.

DEDICATION & SELF-IMPROVEMENT

Physicians at all stages of their career are expected to strive to improve themselves, to teach and be taught, and to seek help for themselves when unable to meet their professional obligations.

OBJECTIVE of the program:

The Professionalism program of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa, is responsible for creating and implementing actions and initiatives for the development, improvement and evaluation of Professionalism amongst the medical students.

Currently, the Professionalism program includes the following:

Orientation

- included in the acceptance package to the Faculty of Medicine is a letter from the Chair of Professionalism regarding their entry into a healing Profession, and a copy of the Declaration of Professionalism.
- during Orientation Week there is an afternoon which includes some talks by a Faculty member and a few residents on "Life as a Doctor", followed by a discussion of the Declaration (led by students).
- the students receive their personal 'parchment' copy of the Declaration at the Oath Ceremony held at the end of the week, recite the opening and closing statements of the Declaration as a whole class (in both languages), and are officially welcomed into the Faculty of Medicine at that time.

Case Scenarios

Professionalism CASE SCENARIO sessions are held during the fall and spring for both YEARS I & II [in both languages]. The class is divided into small groups of 10–13 students for these sessions, each led by a Faculty Facilitator (English and French speaking groups).

A small package of READINGS on Professionalism is distributed to the first year class prior to the first case scenario session.

Lecture

A whole class teaching session is given during the LINK Block (prior to clerkship), including a review of relevant CPSO guidelines

Evaluation

- Professionalism behaviour is evaluated in the PBL setting by the PBL Tutor for each of the Blocks, throughout the first 2 years.
- Students are evaluated for their Professionalism in the clinical setting by their Preceptors during the clerkships in the third (and fourth) years.

Administrative

Professionalism is a standing subcommittee of the UCC, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, chaired by the assistant Deans for undergraduate medical education, Drs Linda Peterson and Brigitte Bonin.

A student / faculty Professionalism Committee meets approximately 3 times per year to review and consult on Professionalism issues. All students and faculty are invited to join this committee.

The current Chair of the Professionalism program is Dr. Walter Hendelman M.D.
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