



**Professionalism Week
November 2013**

Professionalism Week: Purpose

- 1. Generate actionable knowledge about Professionalism across OHSU via a range of interprofessional activities**
- 2. Identify opportunities to improve Professionalism and establish programs to do so.**
- 3. Understand the specific implications of Professionalism in our daily work**
 - Individual professionalism**
 - Organizational professionalism**
 - The interprofessional nature of professionalism**
- 4. Link Professionalism with our OPEX (OHSU Performance Excellence) work**

What is a “Profession”?

A profession is characterized by

- A **specialized body of knowledge** that its members teach and expand so that actions of its members have greater impact on those served
- A **code of ethics** and a **duty of service** that put client-interest (patient care) above self-interest
- The **privilege of self-regulation** granted by society

Professionalism is the basis of each discipline’s contract with society (e.g. RPh, RN, PT, OT, MD, DDS, RD, lawyers, etc.)

Professional Responsibilities – Individual and Institutional Commitment to:

1. Professional competence
2. Honesty with patients
3. Patient confidentiality
4. Maintaining appropriate relations with patients
5. Improving the quality of care
6. Improving access to care
7. A just distribution of finite resources (stewardship of resources)
8. Scientific knowledge
9. Maintaining trust by managing conflicts of interest
10. Professional responsibilities
 - Work collaboratively and respectfully; participate in self-regulation, including remediation and discipline; define and organize standards for current and future members

Roles of the Profession

Knowledge

- Continually advance the body of knowledge and techniques and training necessary to master the knowledge and skills

Norms

- Develop and maintain performance, service and ethical standards that justify the privilege of self regulation

Evaluate

- Actively monitor standards of practice to achieve continual improvement and maintain autonomy and control of professional activities

Professional Ethical Obligations

(irrespective of market forces, societal pressures, and administrative exigencies)

Service

- The primacy of **patient welfare (beneficence)**: the duty to promote good and act in the best interest of the patient, *and the health of society*
- Respect for **patient autonomy**: the duty to protect and foster a patient's free, un-coerced choices

Quality/Safety

- **Non-maleficence**: the duty to do no harm to patients

Financial

- **Social justice**: the equitable distribution of the life-enhancing opportunities afforded by health care

Professional Ethical Obligations: *Patient Welfare (Beneficence)*

This principle is based on a dedication to serving the interest of the patient. Altruism contributes to the trust that is central to the clinician–patient relationship.

Market forces, societal pressures, and administrative exigencies must not compromise this principle.

Professional Ethical Obligations:

Patient Autonomy

Healthcare professionals must have respect for patient autonomy. They are honest with their patients and empower them to make informed decisions about their treatment. Patients' decisions about their care must be paramount, as long as those decisions are in keeping with ethical practice and do not lead to demands for inappropriate care.

Professional Ethical Obligations:

Non-maleficence

The duty to do no harm to patients requires that healthcare professionals are honest about potential harms and weigh them against potential benefits.

Professional Ethical Obligations: *Social Justice*

Healthcare professionals must promote justice in the health care system, including *the fair distribution of health care resources*.

They should work actively to eliminate discrimination in health care, whether based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, or any other social category.

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Unprofessional Behavior: Examples

- **Lack of accountability, integrity, commitment to excellence, duty, service**
- **Allow financial incentives to adversely influence patient care such as the provision of unnecessary services**
- **Disrespectful to other health care professionals**
- **Disruptive behavior**
- **Practicing when impaired**
- **Irresponsible**
- **Unreliable**
- **Not punctual**
- **Ineffective communicator**
- **Disorganized**
- **Records tardy and/or illegible**

“Stewardship of Resources” Component of Professionalism

- **Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of the well-being of the population**

(World Health Report 2000)

- **Inherent Tension**
 1. **Healthcare professionals are taught to do whatever is necessary to promote the patient’s best interest**
 2. **It is an imperative to serve societal and individual interests by containing healthcare costs**

Stewardship of Resources: Commitment to a Just Distribution of Finite Resources

While meeting the needs of individual patients...

- **Provide care based on the wise and cost-effective management of limited resources**
- **The scrupulous avoidance of tests and procedures of little or no value**

The provision of unnecessary services not only exposes patients to avoidable harm and expense but also diminishes the resources available for others.

Professionalism

- **Healthcare professionals must individually *and* collectively (organizationally) fulfill the duties of the profession.**
 - Individual professionalism
 - Organizational professionalism
 - The interprofessional nature of professionalism

Resources

- www.abimfoundation.org/Professionalism/Medical-Professionalism.aspx