

OCPD FREE* Newsletter

*Faculty Resource for Educational Excellence

Office of Continuing Professional Development (OCPD)

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Quote of the Month

“They may forget your name, but they will never forget how you made them feel.”

-Maya Angelou

Professionalism in Medical Education

Health professions education is a dynamic and challenging environment with both learners and providers balancing the professional and personal aspects of caring for patients. This balance is paramount to the success of our current and future healthcare providers. The increasingly business-like health care system and growing use of technology has led to concern about changes in physicians' professionalism attitudes and behaviors.¹ Now, more than ever, it is critical for learners to recognize the importance of professionalism in healthcare. As educators, we model and teach the tenets of professionalism at all times, whether we recognize it or not.

While the importance of defining and teaching professionalism within health professions education is clear, instilling professionalism virtues during the formative years of education and training has posed a challenge.² In order to integrate professionalism principles and attributes into graduate medical education, the ACGME introduced Professionalism as a core competency as a means to define and assess professionalism. Additionally, medical schools have begun to outline foundational professionalism principles and values that are expectations for all students.

Emphasizing the value of professionalism and role modeling professional behaviors is an important responsibility of all faculty. In order to do so successfully, improved awareness of the policies and expectations is vital. At Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, a policy entitled “Attributes of Professionalism” has been developed that includes the key precepts of professionalism within their learning community. Developing a shared understanding of the principles and integrating them within practice is important responsibility of both faculty and learners.

The policy outlines and defines the following guiding attributes of professionalism that are to be applied to the classroom, research laboratory, and clinical settings:

- Commitment to Engaged Learning
- Compassion
- Conscientiousness
- Respect
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Care
- Sense of Duty
- Social Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Trustworthiness

In addition to the challenge of teaching professionalism, assessment of these behaviors can be even more daunting. Last month, Dr. John Mahan (Professor of Pediatrics, Ohio State University), discussed professionalism within the health sciences as part of the TEACH Education Grand Rounds series. His presentation, “New Paradigms and Tools for Teaching and Assessing Professionalism in the Health Sciences,” can be found on the TEACH webpage and will provide valuable guidance for integrating professionalism teaching and assessment into your curriculum.

-Mariah Rudd

References

1. Shrank, W. H., Reed, V. A., & Jernstedt, G. C. (2004). Fostering professionalism in medical education. *Journal of general internal medicine*, 19(8), 887-892.
2. Ludmerer, K. M. (1999). Instilling professionalism in medical education. *Jama*, 282(9), 881-882.



Dean's Corner

Cynda Johnson, MD, MBA

Earlier this month, the school held its first official meeting of the Dean's Council on Advancement. This advisory group is made up of diverse members – including medical school faculty, alumni, and donors of the school, community members, and others who just care deeply about the success of the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine.

The council is committed to raising the profile of the school, better engaging our alumni, and building a stronger culture of philanthropy. I left the meeting energized and encouraged – the group is truly devoted to advancing the school and our mission to develop physician thought leaders through inquiry, research, and discovery. The school's advancement team left with a stack of notes and ideas from the council that we plan to implement in the near future.

Seeing the council in action reminded me that there are many people out there contribute to the success of this school. As faculty, you do that every day when you teach and mentor our students. Thank you for your work in helping to shape the next generation of physicians.