

## Medical Professionalism

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### ABSTRACT

Medical profession is a social contract between doctor and society in medical practice. It follows the business principle with human touch for a dignified medical profession. Proficiency, competency, evidences and set standards in education, training and practice are the key features of medical profession.

**Key words:** business principle, doctor, medical profession, regulation, society

### REVIEW

Medical professionalism is the specific knowledge, skill and attitude displayed to the society and people while undertaking medical practice. Thus it has inherent contract between health professional and society, individual patient or regulatory authority. To discharge this social responsibility it requires reasonable knowledge and skill, personal integrity and ethics, and dedication and accountability. Every doctor should stick on three fundamental principles (primacy of patient welfare, patient autonomy and social justice) and 10 professional responsibilities (commitments to: professional competence, honesty with patients, patient confidentiality, maintaining appropriate relations with patients, improving quality of care, improving access to care, a just distribution of resources, scientific knowledge, managing conflicts of interest and professional responsibilities including self-regulation). Self regulation includes defined roles, practice and professional respect.<sup>1</sup>

Medical doctors expect the standard of professionalism as lifelong learning with space in between job like specialization and continuing professional development; courage of leadership, mentorship and shared learning in the respective field; patient focused team work and organizational responsibility; patient safety, evidences and quality; professional safety and appropriate communication.<sup>2</sup>

Medical professionalism has two facets: individual and institutional. One facet refers to a set of values, behaviours and relationships that underpin the trust the public has in doctors, with doctors being committed to integrity, compassion, altruism, continuous improvement, excellence and teamwork. Other facet refers to the integration of professional culture of individuals to the entire institutional system like curricula and internal stakeholders for its completeness. It addresses right from the entry system, recommended/validated curriculum, teaching-learning methodology to evaluation system.<sup>3</sup>

There has been transformation in medical practice from individual to a team; and there is a clear generation gap among students, residents, faculty, and practitioners. The evolving models range from professional ethics through competency to professional identity. It thus determines the value, scope, guidelines and responsibility within the profession.<sup>4</sup>

Business principle is applicable to medical professionalism as well. These will be to implement knowledge to practice, be competent, present professional attire, behave morally and ethically, maintain the poise, acquire a good communication skill, be precise and clear, remain organized and fix the error efficiently.<sup>5</sup>

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## CONCLUSIONS

Medical profession is the regulated social contract in medical education and practice.

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