Fostering Professionalism

A Program to Monitor and Mentor Students in Professional Behavior

Upstate Medical University
College of Medicine
Background

- Widespread recognition of the importance of professional behavior in the training of medical students and physicians
  - Papadakis’ work correlating professional misconduct sanctions by state medical boards to unprofessional medical school behavior
  - UCSF prototype of professionalism assessment programs duplicated in schools across the country
Background

- Desire on the part of Upstate faculty (and students) to put a process in place to monitor and mentor students in this area
  - Proposal refined by Professionalism Working Group (Drs. Brown, Buchan*, Cleary, Grassl, Haldipur*, Loftus, Maimone, Poole, Shanley*)
  - Input from Student Affairs (Dr. White)
  - Focus group with medical students

*Developed initial proposal
Components of “Fostering Professionalism” Program

- Defining professional behavior
- Communicating expectations and engaging students in dialogue
- Assessing professional behavior
- Identifying professional behaviors
  - Exemplary as well as concerning behavior
- Mentorship and follow-up
Defining professional behavior

- A pattern of behavior over time
- Includes:
  - Academic integrity and honesty
  - Sincere commitment to mastery of curriculum (knowledge, skills, attitude)
  - Compliance with course expectations (e.g., dress and hygiene, respectful handling of cadavers, use of cellphones in class, etc.)
Defining professional behavior

► A pattern of behavior over time
► Includes:
  ► Effective communication, relationships with patients, families, peers, faculty, other health professionals
  ► Working well in a team
  ► Responsibility regarding attendance, punctuality, confidentiality, ethical behavior
  ► Ability to reflect, self-assess, ask for and receive feedback with grace, incorporate it into improvement
Communicating expectations

- Orientation to medical school and at the beginning of each academic year
- Reinforcement in Advisory Dean groups
- Course and clerkship directors define expectations
- Formal, informal or ad hoc discussions
  - At Orientations
  - In POM, Bioethics, Anatomy, courses/clerkships
  - With advisory deans
Assessing professional behavior

- Informal feedback from faculty, peers, residents, advisory deans, etc.
- Course and clerkship assessments
  - 4 of the 10 clerkship competencies are aspects of professionalism
- Formal recognition and awards
  - Gold Humanism Society, others
- The Fostering Professionalism Program
Fostering Professionalism Program: Tracking Professional Behavior over Time

- Faculty identify incident or pattern of behavior (of concern, or exemplary), discuss with course director
- Course or clerkship director completes/ submits report to Faculty Coordinator (Dr. Frechette)
- Mentor talks with course/clerkship director, meets with student, provides advice, recommendations or referrals, identifies follow-up, keeps documentation
- Advisory deans informed, involved in follow-up plan
Who is Vinny Frechette?

- Valedictorian, Class of 1991, College of Medicine, Upstate Medical University, Member of AOA
- Residency, Chief Residency, Dept. of Medicine
- Received Clinical Faculty Teaching Award from Class of 1995, his 1st year as faculty member
- Previous Director of Internal Medicine Residency
- Currently Division Chief, General Internal Medicine
- Widely respected active general internist who takes care of many Upstate faculty and staff; a faculty exemplar for professionalism
Report Form for Exemplary Behavior

Report of Exemplary Professional Behavior
SUNY Upstate Medical University
College of Medicine

Name of Student: ____________________________
Course/Clerkship: __________________________
Name of Faculty submitting the report: ________________
Phone number of person submitting report: ________________
Date of report: ________________

Please describe your observations about this student’s exemplary professional behavior:

Discussed with student (circle one): Yes or No

In general, the student will be informed that you submitted this report. If there is a reason you would prefer not to have the student informed, please explain.

Please submit this report (preferably by email) to Dr. Vincent Frechette, Faculty Coordinator, Fostering Professionalism Program (frechetv@upstate.edu)

For Office Use Only:
The student was informed of this report (Circle one: email, letter, phone, other).

Vincent Frechette, M.D.
Faculty Coordinator
Date:

Copy sent to ____________________
Name of Advisory Dean ____________________ Date
Report Form for Concerns

Report of Unprofessional Behavior
SUNY Upstate Medical University
College of Medicine

Name of Student:

Course/Clerkship:

Name of Faculty submitting the report:

Phone number at which you can be reached:

Date of report:

The following standards from the SUNY Upstate Student Code of Conduct provide context for common concerns about unprofessional behavior. Please check applicable concerns regarding this student:
- Treat a peer, faculty person, or staff member with respect (without regard to race, age, gender, disability, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation).
- Treat a patient or family member with respect (without regard to issues above).
- Maintain patient confidentiality and the accuracy of patient records.
- Treat Upstate property of SUNY Upstate Medical University, both intellectual and physical, with respect. Property includes cadavers and other school property.
- Comply with guidelines regarding plagiarism of intellectual property.
- Maintain personal honor, integrity, and dignity.
- Conduct him/herself in a proper manner, both academically and professionally. This includes maintaining a professional demeanor in the classroom so as to foster a positive learning environment.
- Other (please specify)

Please describe the incident or pattern in detail:

Discussed with student (circle one): Yes or No

In general, the student will be informed that you submitted this report. If there is a reason you would prefer not to have the student informed, please explain.

Please submit this report by email to Dr. Vincent Frechette, Faculty Coordinator,
Fostering Professionalism Program (frechetv@upstate.edu).

For Office Use Only:
This report was discussed with student.

Vincent Frechette, M.D. Date
Faculty Coordinator

Student Date

Copy sent to Name of Advisory Dean Date

Name of Advisory Dean Date
Fostering Professionalism: When Concerns Continue

- Threshold moves action to Committee on Academic Promotion or Judicial Committee and mention on MSPE (Dean’s letter)
  - 3 reports in years 1 and 2, or
  - 3 cumulative reports, or
  - 2 reports in years 3 and 4, or
  - A single report of significant concern

- CAP/Judicial Committee response includes:
  - Probation, suspension, or dismissal
Exemplars

- Communicated to student
- Included in student file
- Could be cited in MSPE or otherwise recognized (letter, certificate at Student Clinicians Ceremony, etc.)
How to submit a report

- Templates will be emailed to all course and clerkship directors, and will be available through the Curriculum Office website.
- Reports can be submitted (preferably by email) directly to Dr. Frechette, or to him via Dr. White, or Dr. Cleary.
What does Faculty Coordinator do?

- May talk with course/clerkship director and/or others about the concern
- Meets with student to discuss concern
- Identifies means to correct behavior with student (may involve other consultants; advisory dean will be informed)
- Maintains record of discussion and outcome
- If threshold met, moves concern to CAP
Tracking program

- Faculty coordinator meets with curriculum and student affairs deans at regular intervals to review patterns of concerns.
- Patterns of reports may initiate other efforts at prevention.
- Annual summary will be provided to EPC and course directors.
Fostering Professionalism

Questions?
Comments?
Suggestions?