


The Importance of Professionalism

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Mistakes Made

As a new program director, I did not realize the importance of developing a culture of professionalism.

There were occurrences within the residency program of lapses in both professional behavior and accountability/conscientiousness.


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Mistakes Made

These occurrences may have been avoidable if there was more of an emphasis on professionalism.


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Examples of lapses in professionalism

- Tardiness/late
- Failure to follow program policies (including work hour submissions, case logs, etc.)
- Unexcused absences from grand rounds and lectures
- Interaction between other residents, faculty or other members of the health care team

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Residency Professionalism Committee

A residency professionalism committee was established, consisting of both junior and senior faculty from each of the different teaching sites.

An associate program director was assigned to be chair of the committee.

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Goals of the Committee




- Develop methods of promoting a culture of professionalism
- Develop a policy for managing professionalism issues

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Lapses in Professional Behavior

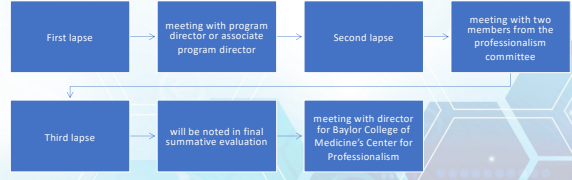
Committee decided that lapses needed to be addressed formally.

Three stages of formal interventions.


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Lapses in Professional Behavior



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Lapses in Professional Behavior

But not all lapses needed to be elevated to the next stage (not submitting work hours on time).

For each minor lapse in professional behavior, a "professionalism demerit" was assigned to the resident.

If more than three professionalism demerits were assigned for the academic year, certain benefits would be lost (unable to do internal moonlighting, CME funding, etc.)

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Recognition - Professionalism Award

Faculty and Residents submit nominations and provide examples of how the resident acted in a professional manner.

Based on the nominations, the professionalism committee members would select one resident every three months to win the award.


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Recognition - Professionalism Award



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Recognition - Professionalism Award



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Recognition - Professionalism Award

The recipients have expressed gratitude for the opportunity to win this award and when I write the letters of recommendation, I notice them including it in their CV.

Helps with fellowship applications and hiring for private practice groups.

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Recognition - Professionalism Award

Purpose of recognition is to demonstrate to the residents of the importance that we place on professionalism.

By sharing the nominations with them, it provides real examples to residents on acts of professionalism and hopefully something they can also strive for.

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Informing the residents

Committee wanted to be sure that the policies and expectations were clear and understood.

Residents were informed of the policies, both during orientation for new residents and at the start of each academic year during a resident only grand rounds. Policy was sent to all residents by email.

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Lessons Learned

- Developing a culture of professionalism within the residency program is a priority.
- Create a professionalism committee – don't try to figure this out on your own.
- Recognizing professional behavior is one method of emphasizing the importance of a professionalism.
- Set up a clear policy that residents are aware of.
- People can change (at least during their residency).

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