New Tools and Paradigms for Assessing Professionalism in the Health Sciences

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Objectives

1. Define 3 models for framing professionalism in the health sciences
2. Describe 3 effective methods for assessing professionalism in health science learners
3. Identify 1-2 methods that you can explore using in assessing professionalism in your learners
Professionalism

- “There seems to be no agreement on what the term (i.e., professionalism) means.” DeAngelis
- “Role modeling must be combined with reflection on the action to truly teach professionalism.” Stern
- “Because of the nature of professionalism, no single tool for assessing it among medical learners and practicing physicians exists.” Mueller
- “Indeed, if the values and commitment that have made modern medicine possible, creating both the powerfully effective technologies and forging the therapeutic partnership with patients, are lost, then medicine will very quickly run into serious difficulties.” Tallis
Professionalism

“Vous êtes dans cette profession comme un appel, et non comme un affaire; comme un appel qui vous retire de vous à chaque instant de l'abnégation, de la dévotion, de l'amour et de la tendresse à votre hommage. Nous devons travailler avec le spirituel du missionnaire avec une largeur de charité qui vous élevés vous loin au-dessus des petits jaloux de la vie.” Osler
Professionalism in the 21st Century

Complex, challenging world
Roots in traditions and age-old truths
Multiple approaches, multiple insights
We need to do better in educating, assessing, reinforcing Professionalism in our learners, and ourselves
Professionalism Models

Virtue

Identity

Behavior

Professionalism

Model 1 - Virtues

- Moral character
- Moral reasoning
- Humanism
Model 2 - Behaviors

- Behaviors
- Milestones
- Competencies
Model 3 – Professional Identity

- Developmental
- Socialization
- Social compact
Question 1

Given that all 3 Professionalism models (constructs) have a long history and real value, which one speaks most powerfully to you as a means to frame the professionalism development and assessment of your learners?
## Professionalism Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Assumptions (Actions result from......)</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Virtue based</strong></td>
<td>Internalizing right values and ethics until habits created</td>
<td>Internal values first, moral reasoning later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior based</strong></td>
<td>Clear expectations, feedback and reinforcement</td>
<td>Expectations, direct feedback and evaluation for competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional identity</strong></td>
<td>Developed identity by socialization and community of practice</td>
<td>Developmental arc to ‘proper’ identity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from: Irby, Hamstra. Acad Med 2016
Professionalism Development: Recommendations

**Virtue:**
Help learners internalize and gain virtues; use moral reasoning

**Behavior:**
Clarify expectations, teach behaviors, provide feedback and sanctions

**Professional identity:**
Provide positive role models, warn against negative role models
# Professionalism Models: Assessment Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virtues</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Professional identity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Written exams</em></td>
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<td><em>Reflective (self-assessment) exercises</em></td>
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<td><em>Multisource assessments</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Observation/feedback</em></td>
<td><em>Observation/feedback</em></td>
<td><em>Moral reasoning exercises</em></td>
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<td><em>Multisource assessments</em></td>
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<td><em>Critical incident/lapses reports</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Professionalism MEX</em></td>
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Adapted from: Irby, Hamstra. Acad Med 2016
Professionalism Assessment: Challenges

- Lack of clarity about best educational methods & assessments
- Complexity of modern society
- Recognition of moral imperative
- Many choices
- Thoughtful attempts, with sound bases, and careful application, can add value to our learners, our profession and society!
Question 2

Which Professionalism assessment models do you currently use with your learners?
### Professionalism Assessment Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observed Clinical Encounter</strong></td>
<td>P-MEX, Standardized Direct Observation Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multisource Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Multisource assessment tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simulation/Observed Structured Clinical Exam</strong></td>
<td>Patient simulation with ethical dilemmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Rotation, course evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patient Feedback</strong></td>
<td>RCP Patient Questionnaire, Wake Forest Physician Trust Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Groningen Reflection Ability Scale, Interpersonal Reactivity Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection/Essays</strong></td>
<td>Reflective writing grading/discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge/Moral Reasoning Exams</strong></td>
<td>Case based scenarios: MCQ, essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism Lapses/Critical Incident Reports</strong></td>
<td>Formal evaluation of observed lapse or self-reported critical incident</td>
</tr>
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Adapted from: Wilkinson. Acad Med 2009
Professionalism Mini-Evaluation Exercise (P-MEX)

- Mini-CEX framework –
  - Structured Clinical Observation
  - Observed Structured Clinical Exercise
- Evaluates 21 specific behaviors
- Trained raters
- Valuable for formative assessment, feedback, reflection

Standardized Direct Observation Assessment Tool (SDOT)

- Not Professionalism specific
  - contains useful professionalism items in context of clinical encounter
- High inter-rater agreement with minimal training
- Good real world applicability – practical
- Useful for formative feedback and evaluation
- Use of other Direct Observation tools

360° Multisource Feedback (MSF)

- Widely used construct in industry; increasing use in academia
- Good MSF models for formative decisions and feedback about professional behaviors
- Best practices: Large sample of raters (10–30) clustered into groups, rating scales on professionalism competencies, consistent anchor responses, paper vrs online, proper and timely feedback critical to formative assessment process
- Challenges in implementation – potentially great value

Berk. Med Teach 2009
Reflection – a Window to Professionalism Development & Status

- Reflection on real cases, clinical scenarios and/or professional interactions
- Insights can be important starting point for discussion/exploration
- Groningen Reflection Ability Scale (GRAS) – 23 items, 5-point Likert = 1 GRAS score (some ability to explore domain scores)
- GRAS measures personal reflection on important multi-facetted medical problems - one-dimensional scale, covering 3 relevant aspects of personal reflection: self-reflection, empathetic reflection, reflective communication

Aukes. Med Teach 2007
Professionalism Climate Assessment

- Professionalism milieu is important for the learner and can reveal much about the ‘hidden curricula’ for the learner

- Formative evaluation of the professionalism climate within a department/work area by learners and faculty (‘power of the group’):
  - provide ‘needs assessment’ to direct education
  - identify specific areas for improvement (systems issues)

- **Penn State Professionalism Questionnaire**
- **OSU Professionalism Climate Survey**

Aukes. Med Teach 2007
Professionalism Climate Assessment

- **Penn State Professionalism Questionnaire**
  - 36 items (ABIM)
  - 7 factors of professionalism

- **OSU Professionalism Climate Survey**
  - 36 items [based on Safety Attitudes Questionnaire]
  - 7 factors of professional behavior (including teamwork)
  - More behaviorally based

Sexton. BMC HSR 2006
Mahan. CGEA 2016
Question 3

*Which Professionalism assessment tool would you like to explore using with your learners?*

*And why?*
Recommendations

1. Define the Professionalism model underlying the assessment tool to be employed.
2. Link assessment to educational task and effort – what is being taught/learned.
3. Multiple assessment methods are superior to 1!
4. Utilize assessments that address multiple Professionalism models (best if all 3).
Professionalism Assessment: A Team Sport

Questions?
Summary

1. The 3 Professionalism models: virtues, behavior, professionalism identity – are constructs that all have merit and power for learners and teachers.

2. There are multiple methods developed to assess professionalism from at least 10 different assessment methods - multiple methods addressing important Professionalism constructs can allow useful approximation of the learner’s state and open areas for further development.

3. Assessment of the Professionalism climate can provide a valuable 360° measure of the ‘hidden curriculum’ surrounding your learners.
19. Al-Eraky MM. Twelve Tips for teaching medical professionalism at all levels of medical education, Medical Teacher. 2015;37:1018-1025.
The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head.