



## ◆ OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ Understand the literature definition of “profession” and “medical professionalism”.
- ❖ Understand the key elements and attributes of medical/health professionalism.
- ❖ Understand the sources and the processes for generating a definition for medical professionalism.
- ❖ Discuss practical examples (case scenarios) about professionalism and key principles learnt.
- ❖ At the end of the lecture, identify take home messages about this lecture and why professionalism important?

## ◆ Definitions:

### •Profession:

1. Is the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize a person in a work setting or profession.
2. Is an occupation whose core element is work, based on the mastery of a complex body of knowledge and skills. (*Oxford English Dictionary*)
3. Is a vocation requiring knowledge of some departments of learning or science. (*American College Dictionary*)

•**Professionalism:** Constituting those *attitude* and *behaviors* that serve to maintain patient interest above physician self-interest. (*American Board of Internal Medicine*)

•**Medical professionalism:** Medicine is a vocation in which a doctor's knowledge, clinical skills, and judgment are put in the service of protecting and restoring human well-being. This purpose is realized through a partnership between a patient and doctor, one based on mutual respect, individual responsibility and appropriate accountability.

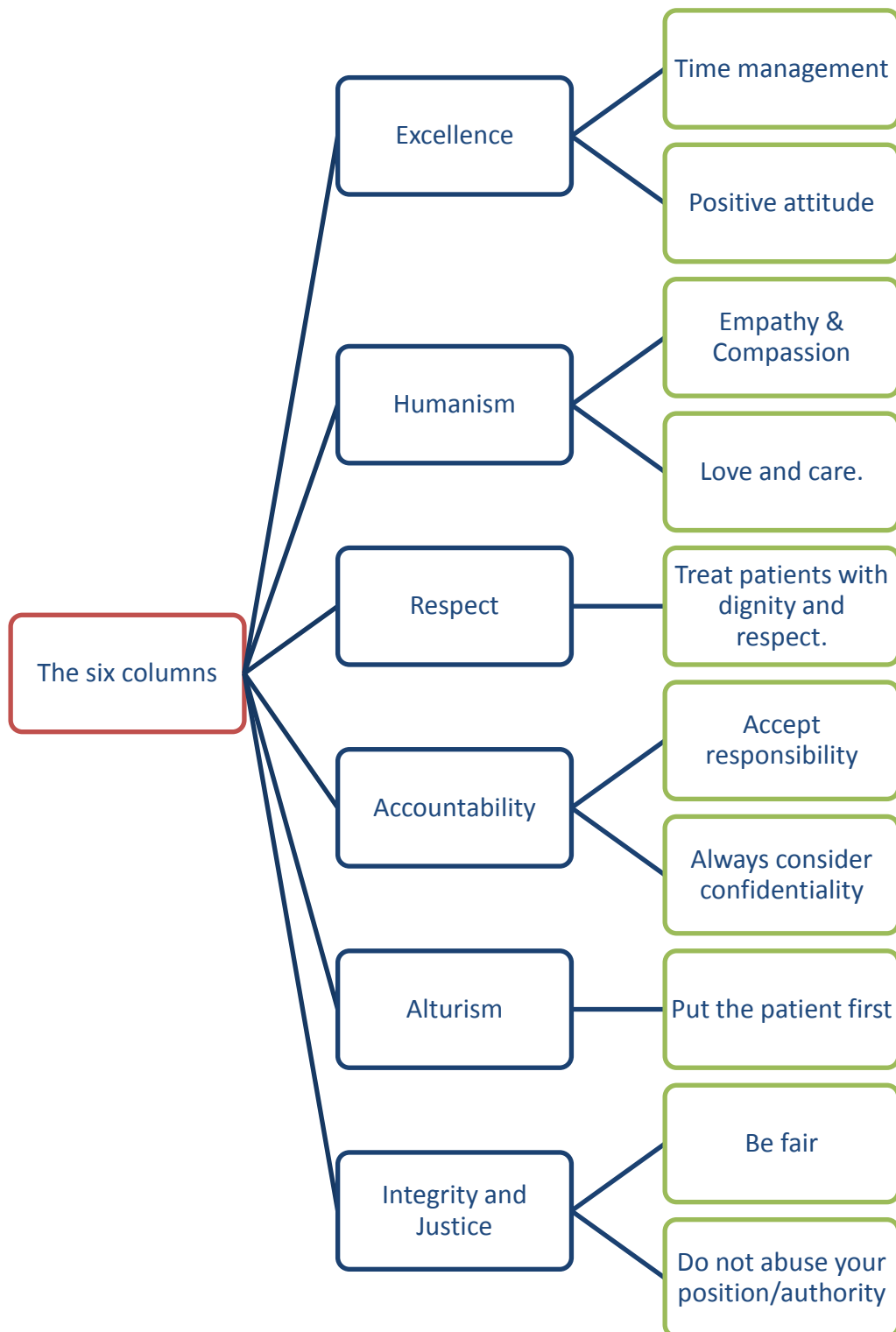
## ◆ Key Elements:

Six columns of the building  
(representing professional values):

- 1- Excellence.
- 2- Humanism.
- 3- Respect.
- 4- Accountability.
- 5- Altruism.
- 6- Integrity and justice

Four steps of the building  
(representing key bases of professionalism):

- 1- Ethical and Legal Boundaries.
- 2- Communication and Interpersonal Skills.
- 3- Continuous Learning and Self Development.
- 4- Clinical Competence (Knowledge and Skills).



### Accountability

- **To patients:** honoring the patient/physician relationship.
- **To the society:** Addressing the health needs of the public.
- **To the profession:** adhering to medicine's ethics precepts.

**Integrity:** Consistent regards for the highest standards of behaviors and refusal to violate one's personal or professional codes.

### ◆ Professional Attributes:

- ❖ **Confidentiality:** keeping conversations between doctor and patients unrevealed.
- ❖ **Trustworthiness:** deserving trust or confidence
- ❖ **Honesty:** being truthful in representing facts.
- ❖ **Loyalty:** unfailing fulfillment to one's duties and obligations.
- ❖ **Reliability:** keeping your word, honoring your commitments.

### ◆ The sources for generating a definition for professionalism might include:

- 1- Literature.
- 2- Published research papers.
- 3- Legal and ethical documents.
- 4- Disciplinary action documents in the hospital, and workplace. These documents are confidential.

### ◆ Why professionalism is important:

- ❖ Being productive.
- ❖ Effective management of relationships.
- ❖ Handling conflicts.
- ❖ Being an ambassador.
- ❖ Being mission-minded.

### ◆ Take home message:

- 1- The definition might vary depending on culture, law, and community needs.
- 2- The definition components (key elements) should clearly define the unwritten contract between a doctor and patients.
- 3- We could use the definition of professionalism to check our performance, and help us to direct our goals for continuous improvement.