

# Professionalism in Different Cultural Contexts



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# Objectives:

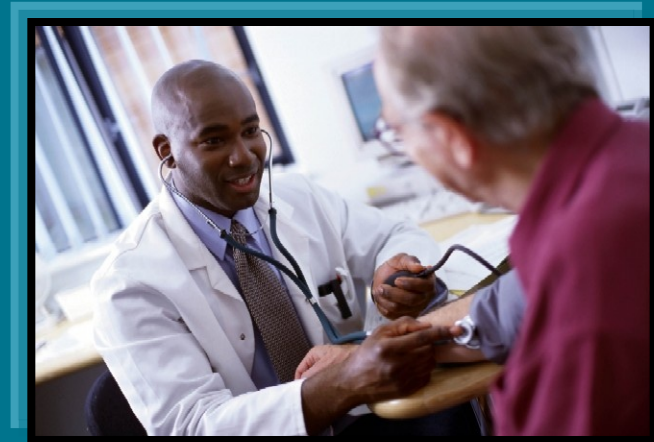
Students should be able to understand and describe;

- 1-The role of culture in health care
- 2- Different Consultation Models
- 4- Importance of Respect to others' beliefs
- 5- PEARLS Concept

# Cultural Influences On Medical Professionalism

## Characteristics of Professionalism

- Competency
- Responsibility
- Attitude
- Conduct on the job



# Attitudes Central To Medical Professionalism

## In Cultural Context

- Humility تواضع
- Empathy تعاطف
- Respect
- Sensitivity
- Curiosity
- Awareness of all outside influences including cultural on patients health

# Focusing On Knowledge In Cultural Context

1. It is important for a medical student or post graduate trainee to learn about the surrounding community in which he/she practices or trains.  
e.g. Socio economic status, patterns of housing nutritional habits, healing practices and disease incidence and prevalence.
2. The knowledge taught has specific evidence based impact on health care delivery.  
e.g. How Ramadan fasting affects Muslims who are diabetic.

# Focusing On **Skills** In Cultural Context

It is crucial to understand health beliefs of those who come from different cultures or have different health care experiences.

# Medical Professionalism

Three fundamental principles:

1. Patient welfare
2. Patient autonomy
3. Social justice





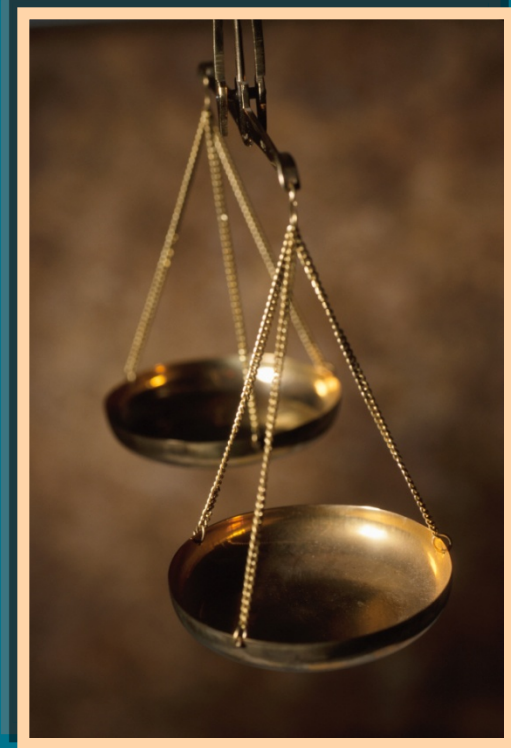
# Patient Welfare Including Autonomy

1. Professional competence
2. Honesty with patients -- integrity
3. Patient confidentiality
4. Caring attitude
5. Scientific knowledge
6. Maintaining trust
7. Setting and maintaining professional standards.



# Social Justice

1. A just distribution of resources
2. Managing conflict of interest
3. Improving quality and access to care
4. Respect for colleagues



# The Centrality Of Patient Physician Relationship To Medical Professionalism

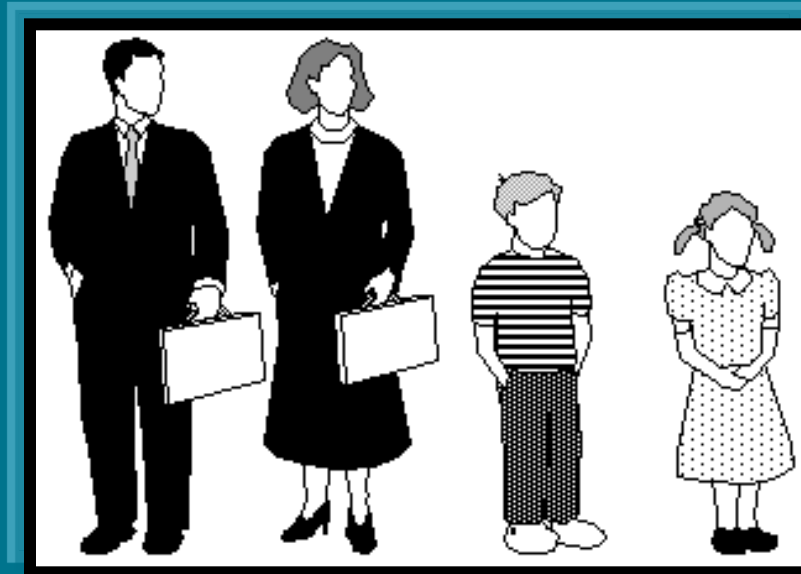
## Four Possible Consultation Models

1. Physician as parent, imam or priest (paternalistic)... **China /Far East**
2. Physician as a mentor
3. Physician as a technician or contractor
4. Physician as a friend or Counselor

# Cultural Influences On Medical Professionalism

Dependent on community's social values and moral norms

## PATERNALISTIC MODEL



# Cultural Influences On Medical Professionalism

## Physician as a PARENT PATERNALISTIC MODEL:

Physicians are in the best position to judge what is best for their patients. In a strong form of this, physicians authoritatively order patients to assent (with coercion if necessary).

Culturally applicable in **Chinese** culture and partially in other Far East and South Asian cultures.

# Cultural Influences

## Physician as a MENTOR DELIBERATIVE MODEL

Physician objectively knows and prioritizes patient's personal and medical values.

The physician mentor's grip on decision making is more relaxed than the physician / parent model but autonomy-conscious patients find it unsatisfactory.

Culturally this is an option for some of the patients in **Eastern countries**

# CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Cont'd

## Physicians as TECHNICIANS

### INFORMATIVE ENGINEERING MODEL

Physicians only provide value neutral medical information and leaving patients to make decisions independently based on personal values (**total patient autonomy**).



# CULTURAL INFLUENCES Cont'd

Physicians treat diseases rather than patients and sick persons are “Consumers”.

Culturally applicable To certain sections of **Western** and relatively less eastern population.





# Cultural Influences

Contd

## Physicians as FRIENDS OR COUNSELLORS

### INTERPRETIVE/ COLLEGIAL MODEL

- Physician's medical facts and patients personal values contribute to balanced medical decision-making.
- Upholds patient autonomy without undermining the physician's duty of beneficence.
- Shared decision making
- Culturally popular in the West
- Increasingly accepted in the East .

# Cultural Influences Contd

**While providing professional care physician must not impose his / her view on a patient' s---**

- **Life style, culture, beliefs, race**
- **Sex, age / sexuality**
- **Social status / economic worth**

**Physicians must be prepared to explain and justify his / her actions and decisions**

# Cultural Influences

Contd

## CONFIDENTIALITY

- Confidentiality concept **may not be the same in the East as in the West.**
- However its principles are applicable in most settings.



# Special Cultural Issues In Professional Care In Different Parts Of The World

- Insistence on eye contact?
- Uncovering of face in some females
- Undressing of female patients?
- Sharing of confidential information with spouses,
- History taking of female adults from parents or husbands?
- Giving information to patients in a way they can understand



# Special Cultural Issues Contd

## Accepting gifts or other inducements

- You should not ask for or accept any material rewards, except those of insignificant value from representatives of pharmaceutical companies.
- Help with conferences and educational activities may be acceptable

# Cultural Issues Contd

- Physicians must not exploit patient's vulnerability or lack of medical knowledge.

# CULTURAL ISSUES Contd

## RESEARCH

- Research should not be contrary to the patient's interest e.g. exploitation of developing countries patients.
- Research protocol should be approved by a research ethics committee.
- This committee may be non existent in many settings.
- Your conduct in the research must not be influenced by payments or gifts.
- Record your research results truthfully



# Cultural Context In Under-graduate Medical Education Curriculum

The goal of the curriculum should be to prepare students to care for patients from diverse social and cultural backgrounds including racial, ethnic and gender biases.

# Professionalism in Different Cultural Contexts

- Cultural Competency
- Respect
- Assess
- Sensitivity/ Self Awareness
- Humility

# Professionalism in Different Cultural Contexts

- **Partnership:** Working with the patient to accomplish a shared outcome
- **Empathy:** Recognizing and comprehending another's feelings or experience
- **Analogy:** Being willing to acknowledge or express regret for contributing to a patient's discomfort, distress, or ill feelings
- **Respect:** Non-judgmental acceptance of each patient as a unique individual; treating others as you would have them treat you.
- **Legitimization:** Accepting patient's feelings or reactions regardless of whether or not you agree with those perceptions.
- **Support:** Expressing willingness to care and be helpful to the patient however you can.

# Professionalism in Different Cultural Contexts

- Culture is **directly related** to health promotion, disease prevention, early detection, access to health care, trust and compliance

# CONCLUSION

Patients are entitled to good standards of professional practice and care in all cultural settings.

The essential elements of this medical professionalism are:

- 1 - Professional competence
- 2 - Good relationship with patients and colleagues
- 3 - Observance of professional ethical obligations

Medical teachers should be a role model' in application of these essentials

# Summary

We must learn to demonstrate our respect to individual patients in ways that each person will receive or perceive as being respectful.

# THANK YOU VERY MUCH

