Improving Professionalism: Enhanced Perceptions of Professionalism in General Surgery Residents After Administration of a Professional Education Program

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• Definitions

– ‘the competence or skill expected of a professional’

– ‘the skill, good judgment, and polite behaviour that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well’

– ‘the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values, and reflections in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served.’
The Need for Professionalism Education

- Changes in social and economic climates have altered the appearance and presentation of professionalism in healthcare
Hypothesis

• We propose that General Surgery residents’ self–perception of professionalism will improve following the implementation of a professionalism education program
Objectives

• Define professionalism as it relates to the General Surgery Residency Program at the University of Manitoba

• Develop and implement a six month professionalism education program within the General Surgery residency program at the University of Manitoba

• Develop a multi-faceted outcome assessment that will measure residents’ self-perceptions of their own professionalism and professional behaviour
Methods

- Pre course questionnaire
  - Developed by the APTA
  - Previously validated
- Details questions related to
  - Accountability
  - Altruism
  - Compassion/Caring
  - Excellence
  - Integrity
  - Professional duty
  - Social responsibility
Methods

• Professionalism Education Program

1. Defining ‘professionalism’ session
2. Development of a ‘Code of Professionalism’ tag
3. Training in Crucial Conversations
4. Journal club discussion of professionalism
5. Cinemeducation session
Methods

- Post course questionnaire
  - Details same questions related to
    - Accountability
    - Altruism
    - Compassion/Caring
    - Excellence
    - Integrity
    - Professional duty
    - Social responsibility

- SurveyMonkey questionnaire
  - Personal story of professionalism breakthrough
Methods

• Interviews
  • Conducted by Dr Samantha Kelleher
  • 30 minute interviews
  • Questions regarding perceptions of professionalism
Data Analysis

• Quantitative Data
  • Centre for Healthcare Innovation
  • 24/26 pre survey responses
  • 16/26 post survey responses

• Qualitative Data
  • Thematic extraction and analysis
  • 12/26 online survey responses
  • 4 interviews completed
Data Analysis

- Excellent reliability of all core values
- Significant change in self perceptions of social responsibility and approaching statistical significance in integrity
- Trend towards improvement of self perceptions in all core values of professionalism

Table 3. Pre-Post Change Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Value</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>0.04 (0.12)</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>0.12 (0.15)</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion/Caring</td>
<td>0.16 (0.15)</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>0.24 (0.15)</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>0.21 (0.11)</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Duty</td>
<td>0.15 (0.09)</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>0.29 (0.13)</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Change (Std error)
*Restricted maximum likelihood estimation (REML)
Thematic Analysis

- Common themes surrounding lapses in professionalism:
  - Expectations (unclear or differing)
  - Poor communication and misunderstandings
  - Stress/frustration/burnout
  - Assumptions or judgements
  - Hierarch and power struggles
Thematic Analysis

- Most helpful components:
  - Crucial Conversations
  - Defining Professionalism
  - Journal Club Discussion
Changes in Self Perception

• ‘I am more aware of how my actions are perceived.’

• ‘It has made me reflect on what I think professionalism is, and what I feel I have both positively and negatively contributed to my work’s professional environment.’

• ‘I think my perception has not changed a lot but I think my awareness to what is professional and what is not has changed. I also think the way I deal with situations where people are unprofessional has changed.’

• ‘I have probably improved as a colleague.’
Conclusions

• Professionalism was defined as it relates to the General Surgery Residency Program

• A 6-month Professionalism Education Program was developed and implemented within the General Surgery Residency Program

• Administration of a Professionalism Education Program DID improve self perceptions of professionalism particularly in the areas of
  • Social Responsibility
  • Integrity
  • Professional Duty
Future Directions

• Development of formal Professionalism Education Program
  • Generalized course material
  • Required for General Surgery residents
  • Transferrable across healthcare professions

• Acceptance by Surgery Department, the University, the Region
  • Understanding the importance of professionalism and leadership

• Collaboration between the General Surgery Section at the University of Manitoba and other programs across Canada
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Limitations

- Participation
- Honesty
- Emotional intelligence
- Time commitment
- Volunteer participation