

MODULE TITLE:	HEALTH ADVOCACY	01-Jan-2009
DEVELOPED BY:	Wendy Crebbin	
Module Rationale and Objectives	<p>In fulfilling the role of Health Advocate, surgeons need to be able to recognise the importance of advocacy activities in responding to the challenges represented by those social, environmental, and biological factors that determine the health of patients and society. They should recognise advocacy as an essential and fundamental component of health promotion that occurs at the level of the individual patient, the practice population, and the broader community.</p> <p>At graduation the trainee will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ define and adopt the roles and responsibilities of surgeons as health advocates ▪ identify the important determinants of health affecting patients ▪ contribute effectively to improved health of patients and communities ▪ recognise and respond to those issues where advocacy is appropriate ▪ discuss relevant health issues with patients and promote patient's health maintenance ▪ promote health maintenance of colleagues ▪ look after their own health 	
Suggested Reading	<p>There are no prescribed texts; trainees will be expected to keep abreast with current literature. Suggested reading:</p> <p>Australian Council for Safety and Quality in Health Care, 2005, 'Providing continuity of care', National Patient Safety Education Framework, pp. 121-129: refer to requirements for Level 3 www.safetyandquality.org/framework0705.pdf</p> <p>Chapman, S. 2004, 'Advocacy for public health: a primer', Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, v. 58, pp. 361-365: www.racp.edu.au/public/ccch/cph_thrMay2.pdf</p> <p>There are many documents which offer advice on managing specific conditions. The University of Sydney, School of Public Health provides lists of references www.health.usyd.edu.au/current/research/media.php under the headings of 'Advocacy' and 'Risk Reportage and Perception'.</p> <p>The following site also provides access to FAQs and articles on a variety of conditions: http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/404/?404; http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/html/help/netinfoe.html</p> <p>The AMA has a range of publications relating to public health issues on www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/topic/policy-public-health</p> <p>Requirements and references specific to New Zealand are available on www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/0/B13E45ADA9BC8943CC256EC4000A8749/\$File/12PublicHealthInfrastructure.doc</p>	
Learning Opportunities and Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online ▪ Literature review ▪ Participation in Unit audits and reviews 	
How this unit will be assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Half yearly Supervisor's reports ▪ Examination 	

MODULE OBJECTIVES	
Identifying and responding to important determinants of health effecting patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the patient's status with respect to one or more of the determinants of health (e.g. unemployment, poverty); adapting the assessment and management accordingly Provide information to patients about ways in which they can improve/maintain their health Discuss with patients the significance of current research on improving/maintaining health with their condition Advise patients on possible life-style changes that would improve their health
Contribute effectively to improved health of patients and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the most important determinants of, be familiar with the underlying research evidence, and applying this to, common problems and conditions in your chosen area of surgery Describe how public policy is developed; identifying current policies that affect health, either positively or negatively; and cite examples of how policy has been changed as a result of actions by medical professionals
Promote health maintenance of patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide education and information Promote wellness and healthy behaviour Support self-management Provide health care across the disease continuum Able to share power and involve patients in all aspects of health care decision-making
Recognise and respond to those issues where advocacy is appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the key issues currently under debate regarding changes in the national health care system, indicating how these changes might affect societal health outcomes, and advocate to decreasing the burden of illness through a relevant medical society or community advocacy group/organisation In the analysis of the specialist's practice population, work with specialty society and other associations in identifying current "at risk" groups within the specialty and applying the available knowledge about prevention to "at risk" groups Participate in unit discussions about maintenance/improvement of theatre and ward resources for their specialty and where appropriate be involved in advocacy support for these resources within the hospital community Be able to write a discussion paper addressed to hospital administration/JRs and/or government agencies about issues which potentially jeopardise their specialty's capacity to maintain patient focused services
Promote health maintenance of colleagues to look after their own health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise when members of the team are not working at their optimal level due to ill health (from any cause) and be prepared to address this in a timely fashion Take responsibility to ensure that whenever they are on duty, or on-call, that they are at optimal level of performance by abstaining from alcohol or any other performance changing drugs

SELF ASSESSMENT

Identifying and responding to important determinants of health effecting patients, and

Contribute effectively to improved health of patients and communities:

- In assessing a patient, how much priority do you give (for example, how much information do you seek) to the wide range of health determinants which effect their current health and potential recovery?
- How well informed are you about current research on improving/maintaining health in the range of conditions that are regularly met within your specialty?
- How well informed are you about current research on improving/maintaining health in the wider range of conditions which are likely to lead to chronic, rather than acute, health conditions
- Do you conscientiously contribute to surveys, audits, etc. that seek information that could contribute to public policy on improving health?

Promote health maintenance of patients:

- What proportion of your patients require changes of life style to improve their longer-term prognosis?
- With what percentage of such patients do you take the time to advocate appropriate life style changes?

- When a patient asks a question about health maintenance (relating to their condition) how effectively do you respond?
- Are you always able to provide them with additional sources of information, or direct them towards places where such information can be found?
- To what extent do you promote appropriate life style changes if those changes are not directly related to their current presenting condition?

Recognise and respond to those issues where advocacy is appropriate:

- List the ways in which you have been involved in health advocacy in the community
- List the ways that you have been involved in advocating for better resources for surgery in general, or your surgical specialty in your hospital and/or region
- List the areas in your hospital and/or region in which you could be involved to improve education and or resources

Promote health maintenance of colleagues to look after their own health:

Consider the following case study:

You are part way through an operation when you become aware that one of the members of the team is under the influence of a drug which is effecting their capacity to function professionally.

- What issues have been raised in this scenario?
- What are your initial thoughts or reactions to the situation being described?
- What level of responsibility are you obliged to take, and what options could you pursue in a situation like this?
- What do you think you would do if you were involved in such a situation?
- What might the personal consequences of such an action be for you?
- Have you ever encountered a situation like this and if so what did you do?
- How do you feel about what you did?