

MODULE TITLE:	PROFESSIONALISM & ETHICS	01-Jan-2009
DEVELOPED BY:	Wendy Crebbin	
Module Rationale and Objectives	<p>All surgical trainees are required to have a thorough understanding of the ethical principles of medicine and how these apply to medical practice. They are also required to adopt an ethical approach to all aspects of their professional practice. This module draws trainees' attention to the aspects of ethical and legal issues; medical indemnity and risk management; time management; and health advocacy, as well as management and leadership.</p> <p>At graduation the trainee will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identify ethical expectations that impinge on the most common medico-legal issues ▪ interpret ethical and legal requirements of the medical profession into their daily practice ▪ act ethically towards their patients and colleagues and consistently apply ethical principles ▪ handle complaints including self-criticism or criticism from colleagues or patients ▪ approach and deal with all patients with a non-discriminatory, non-judgmental attitude ▪ employ a consultative approach with colleagues and other professionals ▪ recognise the need to refer patients to other professionals ▪ respect the different kinds of knowledge and expertise which contribute to the effective functioning of a clinical team ▪ maintain professional standards in their role as a surgeon and a Fellow of the College 	
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, 'Being ethical', National Patient Safety Education Framework, pp. 140-158: refer to requirements for Level 3 http://www.safetyandquality.org/framework0705.pdf</p> <p>Breen, K. Plueckhahn V. & Cordner, S. 1997, Ethics, Law and Medical Practice, Allen & Unwin. ISBN 1-86448-407-1</p> <p>AMA Code of Ethics, 2003, available from the AMA website: http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-5WW598</p> <p>Communicating with patients: advice for medical practitioners (draft version), available from the NHMRC website: http://www7.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications/synopses/e58syn.htm</p> <p>National Privacy Principles and Associated State Legislation: Application of the privacy laws to medical records in Victoria is available from AMA Victoria. Email address is amavic@amavic.com.au</p> <p>New Zealand Medical Association, Code of Ethics, http://www.nzma.org.nz/about/ethics/codeofethics.pdf</p> <p>National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Ethical Issues, 2004: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/ethics/human/issues/index.htm</p> <p>NSW Health, 2005, Guidelines for end-of-life care and decision making: http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2005/pdf/end_of_life_care.pdf</p> <p>Pathfinder, Australian Health Law: http://www.law.usyd.edu.au/~library/pathfind/health_p.htm</p>	
Learning Opportunities and Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online ▪ Literature review 	
How this unit will be assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Half yearly Supervisor's reports ▪ Examination 	

MODULE OBJECTIVES	
Ethical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and demonstrate the qualities of an ethical practitioner (altruism, honesty, patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, fidelity, social justice, utility, accountability, respect) ▪ Accurately describe the ethical rights of patients ▪ Critically evaluate their own communication skills with patients and colleagues ▪ Is accountable for their decisions and actions ▪ Acknowledge their own limitations ▪ Acknowledge and learn from mistakes ▪ Appropriately adjust the way they communicate with patients (and their families) to accommodate cultural and linguistic differences and to facilitate their informed decision making and consent ▪ Conduct examinations in a culturally appropriate manner ▪ Manage patients in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to their physical, social, cultural, and psychological needs ▪ Act responsibly ▪ Apply state/regional privacy principles in their medical practice
Legal issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accurately describe the legal rights of patients ▪ Distinguish between the different requirements for medical records, reports and certificates ▪ Identify the most salient points in relation to medical registration and discipline
Medical indemnity and risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the standards of 'informed consent' ▪ Summarise the key issues in relation to professional liability and negligence ▪ Outline the mechanisms of qualified privilege and confidentiality ▪ Identify and manage risk ▪ Communicate information to patients (and their family) about potentialities and risks of treatment options ▪ Plans, and where necessary implements, a risk management plan ▪ Describe, and if necessary implement, the approach for dealing with and reporting adverse events
Time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain comprehensive, accurate and timely records ▪ Initiate time management strategies in relation to their own practices
Health advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain their own health ▪ Advises patients on ways to promote and/or maintain their health ▪ Advocates for patient health ▪ Supports colleagues to maintain health
Management and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify local requirements for practice and credentialing ▪ Identify and differentiate between resources of the health care delivery system and individual patient needs ▪ Apply a wide range of information to prioritise needs and demands ▪ Effectively assess and manage systemic risk factors ▪ Review the obligations of medical practitioners under various statutes ▪ Resolve conflicts ▪ Summarise the standards of care as defined by the college and relevant statutory bodies ▪ Describe the health complaints system ▪ Review the requirements of medical practitioners in relation to court procedures, giving evidence and medico-legal examinations ▪ Communicating with patients, parents, peers and other professionals

SELF ASSESSMENT

Ethical practitioner:

Consider the following case study:

You are asked to see a 50-year old physician's wife who is hospitalised because of a seizure. During the course of your history taking, the patient informs you that she has been taking very large amounts of a tranquilliser and analgesics containing narcotics for control of symptoms of a stress related disorder. These drugs have been prescribed, on an ongoing basis, by her husband who appears to be acting as her physician.

- What are your initial thoughts or reactions to the situation being described?
- What options could you pursue in reacting to 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?
- Why did you do what you did? How did you feel about what you did afterward?

Source: *CanMEDS Teaching the Professional Role*. Available online via http://rcpsc.medical.org/publications/roles_e.html#casestudy

Legal issues, medical indemnity and risk management:

Identify and compare the legal and risk management issues of gaining informed consent from a person who is:

- 12 years old
- 15 years old
- 40 years old suffering from schizophrenia
- a teenager who is an emergency admission

Ensure that you are aware of the regulations for the region (and the hospital) in which you are working.

Health advocacy:

See Health Advocacy module

Management and leadership:

See Management and Leadership module