Spreading the Principles of Professionalism: The U.S. Experience

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ABIM Foundation
5th Chinese-U.S. Conference on Medical Professionalism
Beijing, China
November 2, 2010
Presentation Outline

• **Phase I:** Defining professionalism in the United States.

• **Phase II:** Understanding the gaps between physician aspirations and actual behaviors.

• **Phase III:** Showcasing examples that are advancing professionalism; implementing strategies by organizations “on the ground”; serving as a resource.
Defining Professionalism

• A series of meetings convened by the ABIM Foundation, the ACP Foundation and the European Federation of Internal Medicine led to the development of the Physician Charter in 2002.

• Outlines principles and commitments of physicians in the 21st century.

• Translated into 12 languages and endorsed by 100 medical organizations worldwide; cited in over 1,000 books and articles to date.
Physician Charter Principles and Commitments

**Principles:**
- Patient welfare first
- Patient autonomy
- Social justice

**Commitments:**
- Professional Competence
- Honesty with Patients
- Patient Confidentiality
- Maintaining Appropriate Relations with Patients
- Improving Quality of Care
- Improving Access to Care
- Just Distribution of Finite Resources
- Scientific Knowledge
- Maintaining Trust by Managing Conflicts of Interest
- Professional Responsibilities
Defining Professionalism

Further defining professionalism by convening experts and publishing journal articles on professionalism.

- **Conflicts of interest**
  - Co-sponsored a conflict of interest initiative with IMAP that convened a group of experts. The group published a highly influential journal article with recommendations for academic medical centers in managing conflicts of interest.

- **Engaging physicians in quality improvement**
  - Conducted “Putting Quality into Practice,” a study of small practices engaging in quality improvement. Developed journal article and widely used video profiling selected physicians.

- **Stewardship of resources**
  - With IMAP, convened a Task Force on Engaging Physicians in Stewardship of Healthcare Resources. The Task Force will issue recommendations on strategies to engage physicians in resource stewardship.

- **Care coordination and patient-centered care**
  - Focus of 2007 and 2008 Forums, and the “Stepping up to the Plate: alliance.”
Our Current Understanding: “Systems” View of Professionalism

Levers for Change

- Individual physician, clinician and patient competencies
- Organizational culture and physician leadership
- Advocacy, system reform

Professionalism in the U.S.: Understanding the Gaps

• “Chasm” between professional norms and behaviors
  – Campbell et al, 2007

• Only 55% people receive recommended care
  – McGlynn et al, 2003

• Loss of public faith in the authority of the medical profession
  – Schlesinger, 2002

• Push to teach, assess and report on professionalism—and pushback from students and physicians
  – “Do as I say, not as I do”
Example: Managing Conflicts of Interest

96%

Respondents saying "yes:" Physicians should put the patient's welfare above the physician's financial interests

67%

Respondents saying "no:" You and your partners have invested in a local imaging facility near your suburban practice. When referring patients for imaging studies, would you refer your patients to this facility?
Maintaining Professional Competence

Physicians responding “yes”

77%

Physicians should undergo recertification examinations periodically throughout their career

33%

In the last 3 years, have you undergone competency assessment by a provider organization or health plan?
Maintaining Trust by Managing Conflicts of Interest

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Respondents saying "no:" You and your partners have invested in a local imaging facility near your suburban practice. When referring patients for imaging studies, would you refer your patients to this facility?

67%
Learning from International Comparisons

• Funding support for the U.S.-China Center on Medical Professionalism.

• Funding researchers at the Mongan Institute for Health Policy to compare professionalism in the U.S. and U.K. (article submitted).
Moving from Understanding to Action

• Convening experts to develop strategies for change, and identifying others to carry work forward.

• Identifying promising organizational strategies for advancing professionalism.

• “Putting the Charter into Practice” demonstration program.

• Serving as a resource.
Convening Experts

Sponsoring meetings where experts identify concrete strategies for change, and commit to moving the work forward.

- ABIM Foundation Forum
- Advancing Team-Based Care
- Task Force on Stewardship of Healthcare Resources
Identify and Showcase Organizational Strategies to Advance Professionalism

– Conducted interviews with leaders from 10 organizations to identify promising strategies to advance professionalism, such as:
  • Structuring compensation to align physician incentives with professional values.
  • Providing peer support for disclosure of errors.
  • Establishing a zero-tolerance policy for disruptive behavior.
– Disseminating findings via web profiles, presentations, and a journal article.
“Putting the Charter into Practice”
Demonstration Program

• Awarded $20,000 Putting the Charter into Practice grants to six organizations that are developing initiatives to advance professionalism among practicing physicians.

• Project leaders participate in quarterly phone calls to share progress and offer support and advice.

• Grantee products include publications, videos and curricula that can be used by other organizations.
Putting the Charter into Practice: Project Examples

• National Physicians Alliance - Promoting Good Stewardship in Clinical Practice
  – Physicians from internal medicine, family medicine and pediatrics developed lists of “5 Things You Can Do in Your Practice” to be a good steward of resources.

• University of Chicago Medical Center - Improving On-Call Etiquette among Internal Medicine Residents in Chicago
  – Created video vignettes depicting "unprofessional" interactions related to on-call etiquette, as part of workshops to improve professionalism.
Putting the Charter into Practice: Project Examples

- **Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University - Increasing Empathic Behaviors of Staff Physicians through Reflective Writing**
  - Project leaders are using reflective writing classes to increase self-awareness among physicians, with a focus on improving empathy.

- **Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center - Timeouts Facilitated by a Coach: Bringing the Charter to Life in Real-time for Hospitalists**
  - The hospital proposes to train two hospitalists to become Physician Charter/Professionalism Coaches.
Putting the Charter into Practice: Project Examples

• Ohio State University Medical Center, Mt. Carmel Health Systems, and OhioHealth - Putting the Charter into Practice for Central Ohio Physicians
  – The investigators plan to collect stories that describe challenging situations in which physicians successfully demonstrated the values of the profession, identify themes and sources of success; and share the stories through educational programming.

• Society of General Internal Medicine-Communicating about Professionalism: SGIM Regional Workshop
  – Project leaders have created a replicable workshop on "Communicating about Professionalism." The workshop features case-based discussion and skills practice and will use scenarios that portray challenges to these principles.
Serving as a Resource

Providing professionalism resources, tools and dialogue through our website, blog and social media channels.
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Thank You