

SKILLS

CONSULTATION SKILLS

Professional and Ethical Practice

Professional and ethical practice is a fundamental component of quality general practice. Reflecting this, the professional and ethical role of the GP is identified as a core domain in the curricula of both the RACGP and ACRRM. The professional and ethical role embraces a wide range of areas: duty of care, boundaries, end-of-life care, professional standards, self-appraisal and self-care, teaching and mentorship, practicing within an ethical framework and life-long learning. Supervisors play an important role in instilling and nurturing professional and ethical values, attitudes and behaviours in their registrars. Fundamentally, these embrace the primacy of the duty of care to patients, the rights of patients to access competent, compassionate care, and the need to practice safely, effectively and ethically. This teaching resource is linked to the [GPSA Teaching Professionalism Guide](#).

<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING AREAS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional and ethical standards, including online professionalism and social media Privacy Duty of care, including duty to follow up patients Consent End-of-life care Working with colleagues Mandatory reporting Boundaries of prescribing for self and family Managing conflicts of interest, including accepting gifts Medical certification Doctors health and self-care – Doctors' Health Advisory Service Teaching and mentoring 				
<p>PRE- SESSION ACTIVITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2014 AFP article Ethics and professionalism in general practice placements: what should students learn? 				
<p>ACTIVITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and teaching on professional and ethical practice can be done using many teaching methods e.g. direct observation, case discussion, scenario-based teaching See over page for activities 				
<p>TEACHING TIPS AND TRAPS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisors need to actively encourage professionalism and not just assume that registrars will passively acquire it Set expectations for professionalism and ethical practice during orientation to the training term – encourage the registrar to read the Medical Board's Good Medical Practice guide Role modelling has a strong influence on registrar behaviour and has been described as the most effective way of instilling professional values – thus, walk the talk! Seek feedback on the registrar's professionalism from a variety of sources, including staff, patients or colleagues Facilitating registrar self-reflection on practice is a critical way of developing professional practice 				
<p>RESOURCES</p> 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="322 1865 430 1962">Read</td> <td data-bbox="430 1865 1503 1962"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Board of Australia Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia AMA - Code of Ethics (revised 2016) </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="322 1962 430 2063">Listen</td> <td data-bbox="430 1962 1503 2063"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABC Radio National Podcast 2013 – Addressing Unprofessional Behaviour by Doctors Medical Council NSW – Informed Consent podcast </td> </tr> </table>	Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Board of Australia Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia AMA - Code of Ethics (revised 2016) 	Listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABC Radio National Podcast 2013 – Addressing Unprofessional Behaviour by Doctors Medical Council NSW – Informed Consent podcast
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<p>FOLLOW UP & EXTENSION ACTIVITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the registrar to identify a professional or ethical issue that they have encountered in a recent consultation (or prospectively over the next few weeks) and write a one page reflection on the challenges of managing it. Then discuss together with a focus on the 'grey areas' of professional practice. 				

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Activities

1. GPSA SHADES OF GREY ETHICAL DILEMMA CARDS

Download the Shades of Grey ethical dilemma cards from the GPSA website

Select a few cards at random and discuss, with reference to the Medical Board's Good medical practice where relevant

2. RANDOM CASE ANALYSIS

While a powerful tool for identifying learning needs and teaching on clinical aspects of practice, random case analysis (RCA) is also a useful teaching method for developing professional practice, especially in the areas of duty of care, patient advocacy and maintenance of professional standards. As part of this process, the supervisor can also assess the registrar's capacity for self-reflection, another aspect of the professional role.

If unfamiliar with the random case analysis process, familiarise yourself by reading the 2013 AFP article [Random case analysis: A new framework for Australian general practice training](#)

Select a few recent registrar consultations at random. Look for opportunities to explore professional and ethical practice, using the questions below:

Professional and ethical role

- Were there any issues related to consent or confidentiality?
- Were there concerns about patient-doctor boundaries?
- How might the patient's culture or values have impacted on the consultation?
- Were there any ethical issues in the case?

From the 2013 AFP article Random case analysis: A new framework for Australian general practice training

