

Webinar 6: Professionalism, Communication, and Students with Disabilities

Text Only Version

Slide 1:

American Association of Medical Colleges: Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures
Webinar Title: Creating a Balance: Professionalism, Communication, and Students with Disabilities

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Slide 2:

Please use the Q&A panel located on the right hand side of your screen to submit your questions. Select: Send to All Panelists.

Slide 3:

The Coalition wishes to thank the AAMC and for their generous support in developing this webinar series.

Slide 4:

Overview

- What is Professionalism?
- Importance of professional communication
- Using the communication guide
- Shaping student communication
- Supporting faculty communication
- Guiding principles
- Questions?

Slide 5:

Professionalism

“Medical professionalism is a belief system about how best to organize and deliver health care, which calls on group members to jointly declare (“profess”) what the public and individual patients can expect regarding shared competency standards and ethical values, and to implement trustworthy means to ensure that all medical professionals live up to these promises.”

Wynia MK, Papadakis MA et al. More than a list of values and desired behaviors: a foundational understanding of medical professionalism. *Acad Med.* 2014

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Slide 6:

Professionalism in Medicine

- Forming relationships with patients, health care team members based on respect, integrity, and responsiveness to others needs
- Applying ethical standards to professional practice
- Professionalism lapses in medical students and residents are predictive of lapses in future professional behavior¹
- Students who were “irresponsible” in medical school were more likely to be disciplined as doctors¹

¹Papadakis MA et al., 2005; Papadakis MA et al., 2008.

Slide 7:

How is medical school unique?

- Expectation of high self-direction and -advocacy in behavior and learning
- Language and communication are part of core “professionalism” competency
- Communication is a critical part of patient care and patient safety
- Expectations of communication and behavior in the clinic are often not clearly articulated
- Students must navigate unspoken rules and hierarchies of the clinical environment
- Faculty and students will soon become part of one professional network
- Environment can trigger “role confusion”
- Performance expectations are greater than in previous settings

Slide 8:

Disability & Professionalism

- A student’s professionalism, especially regarding communication skills, is critical to making an effective transition into medical school
- University personnel have added responsibilities to ensure students understand **What, Where, When and How to communicate** their disability-related needs.
- Students with disabilities have added responsibilities in the educational environment, they must:
Disclose their disability to the university designee
Request accommodations
Engage with DS providers and multiple stakeholders
Work with faculty/staff to **access** approved accommodations

Slide 9:

Common pitfalls in communication: *Students*

- Late notification of a need for accommodations
- Sending overly brief or excessively lengthy and detailed communication
- Taking an overly defensive, emotional, or aggressive stance in communication
- Failure to request assistance
- Lack of clarity on who to notify (See Webinar #5)
- Delicate balance of disclosing disability to those who evaluate them.

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Slide 10:

Common pitfalls in communication: *Faculty and Administration*

- “Role confusion”
- Engaging in dialogue around disability specifics (e.g., diagnosis, treatment, prognosis)
- Minimizing a student’s disclosure, failing to refer them to the DS office, or actively dissuading students from registering with DS
- Engaging in microaggressions around disability (e.g., “outing” students to peers, referring to “special accommodations,” indicating that accommodations are a burden)
- Brief and non-specific responses to students
- Not putting discussions in writing

Slide 11:

Supporting Professional Identity Formation

- Some may be new to accessing accommodations
- Discussing disability can be triggering for students

Past experiences

New to disclosure/disability

Fear of stigma/shame

- Role confusion
- Many do not know what to say or how much to share
- High stakes environment requires getting communication “right”
- DS providers’ role is to support students

Provide guidance around appropriate communication

Slide 12:

Providing tools: Communication Guide

- Discusses professionalism, importance of good communication around disability
- Illustrates “good” and “bad” communication – and WHY
- Provides scripts for written and spoken communication for common scenarios that students face
- Pragmatic tool that demystifies the process
- Able to be individualized for a student
- **See: Communication Guide* in Handouts**

*Jain, N. R., Meeks, L.M. (2015). Appendix 7.1 of *The Guide to Assisting Students with Disabilities: Equal Access in Health Science and Professional Education*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing.

Slide 13:

Poor example email re: tardiness

Professor Garcia,

I’m so sorry I was late to small group today. My symptoms are terrible and I had to take medicine in the middle of the night, which made me sleep in late, and it was really hard to get up in time. I hope no one is mad at me. Can you let my leader know so she doesn’t think I am just lazy?

Sorry again.

Thanks,

Student

WHY?

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Slide 14:

Positive example email re: tardiness

Dear Professor Garcia,

I woke up today with a significant flare of symptoms, related to my disability. Per our previous discussion, I'm writing to let you know that I will be late for my small group today. I have copied my small group leader for the day to ensure that she is aware.

I am working out how to best manage my symptoms so I am able to be on time going forward. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Student

WHY?

Slide 15:

Supporting Faculty Communication

- Examples
- Training
- Boundaries
- Transparency
- Support
- Policies and procedures (see Webinar #5)
- Centralized service
- Expertise (see Webinar #1)
- Effective method: train Clerkship and Course Coordinators (front line!)

Slide 16:

Poor example faculty follow-up email:

Dear Student,

Thank you for coming in today. After our discussion, it sounds like you will be fine in the course without any accommodations. If you need them the office is always there, but hopefully you keep working hard and will not need them!

Best,

Prof Smith

North v. Widener University, 869 F. Supp. 2d 630 (E.D. Penn. 2012).

WHY?

Slide 17:

Positive example faculty follow-up email:

Dear Student,

Thank you for meeting with me today. Because you self-identified as having used disability-related accommodations in the past, I wanted to follow up with information about the Office of Disability Services here at _____ University.

Information about applying for services can be found on the school website at www.xxxx.edu/ds. I have also copied the Director of Disability Services on this email, as you expressed interest in speaking with a DS staff member.

I encourage you to make an appointment to explore the possibility of using accommodations. I hope you find this resource helpful.

Best,

Prof. Smith

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WHY?

Slide 18:

Guiding Principles for Communication

- Be clear and concise.
- Communicate and follow up in a timely manner.
- Ensure that faculty are aware of the expected processes for accessing and providing accommodations
- When difficulty arises: involve DS immediately to avoid any delay or disruption to services.
- Take responsibility for following up.
- Students are not obligated to disclose personal information unrelated to arranging accommodations to faculty or administrators.
- Give students the tools to communicate effectively

Slide 19:

Questions?

Slide 20:

Resources

To join the List-Serv contact:

Leigh Culley at lculley@pitt.edu

For more information on the Coalition go to:

sds.ucsf.edu/coalition

To order the book visit:

Save 20%

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Slide 21:

Be sure to register for the next

webinar: "Q & A"

(10/21/15)

Details and Registration can be found:

www.aamc.org/gsa