

Code of Professional Conduct

The University of Tennessee medical community believes that professionals gain their credibility by their commitment to society. As a professional group, we recognize our obligation to our patients, colleagues, community, families, and ourselves. Realizing that it is a privilege and an honor to be a medical professional, we the students, residents, fellows, and faculty of the UT Memphis College of Medicine embrace the following ideals:

Patient welfare is our primary concern, for only by commitment do we justify the trust placed in us by patients and the community at large. Although we hold the acquisition of knowledge and the development of technical skills essential to patient care, we shall strive to balance the science with the art of medicine by maintaining respect and compassion for the dignity of all patients. Each patient shall receive our best efforts regardless of personal feelings or biases. Desires for social or economic gain shall not affect the honesty and integrity with which we deal with patients. Nor shall the pressures placed upon the members of our profession compromise the quality of care we provide.

Relationships with our colleagues are an exceedingly important part of professional conduct. Our interactions with colleagues provide us a sense of support, trust, and sharing. As members of a professional community, we shall be aware that our personal conduct reflects upon others of that community. Professionalism includes being respectful in our communications and behavior toward colleagues and others. We shall avoid comments and actions that might reasonably be perceived as offensive or demeaning by others. This applies also to communications on web-based social media and other electronic media.

We shall be willing to share our knowledge and expertise with colleagues and remain open to their advice and criticism. We shall know our own limitations and ask for advice when needed. We shall fulfill our own responsibility and, in the spirit of professional cooperation, accommodate a colleague if our assistance is requested. We shall be sensitive to the physical and emotional weaknesses of a colleague and shall lend support in time of need. Further, our responsibility to patient care implies identification of colleagues whose ability to provide care is impaired. This must be followed by our full support toward the rehabilitation of those colleagues, and their reintegration into the professional community.

Integrating personal growth into our professional development is essential to our commitment to medicine. To this end, we shall be attentive to our needs for physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being. We shall allow time for personal and family relations which enrich our lives and promote self-knowledge. Attention to personal maturation, family commitments and professional growth represent a continuing challenge throughout our career.

As medical professionals, we realize that we share with all citizens certain civic duties. We shall strive to be responsible citizens. Our professional status shall not be used as a means to power and control. Rather, we seek to offer informed and compassionate leadership.