

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT IN THE THIRD - AND FOURTH - YEAR CLERKSHIPS

The clinical rotations in the third and fourth years of medical school place demands and requirements on the students that go significantly above and beyond academic achievement as measured by performance on tests and by the ability to field questions learned through didactic instruction and reading. The student also is accountable for his or her behavior in each of the following areas:

- **Professional and Ethical Conduct**

The welfare of patients and their families is of foremost concern. Students must show respect and courtesy for patients and their families, even under difficult situations such as being challenged or provoked. Students must safeguard their patients' confidentiality in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). For example, there are to be no casual communications regarding patients in public places, such as hallways, elevators, cafeterias, gyms, etc.

- **Punctuality, Responsibility and Reliability**

Students are expected to be available and present for all scheduled clerkship activities. Any absences must be approved by the clerkship director in advance. Make-up assignments will be determined by the clerkship director; absences due to illness may require a physician's statement. Tardiness is unacceptable. Students are expected to conform to the prevailing schedule at the sites where they are assigned for their clinical instruction.

- **Getting Along with Other Members of The Medical Team**

Good relationships with nurses, aides, ward clerks, and anyone else involved in the care of the patient are absolutely essential. Students are expected to be courteous to all medical staff at the sites where they are assigned for their clinical instruction.

- **Getting Along with Staff**

Students need to be polite and respectful to the patients, faculty and residents, and all hospital employees. Much of the daily work in keeping a clerkship going falls on the shoulders of administrative assistants, secretaries, receptionists, and other staff that deserve respect. Students are expected to be considerate of and courteous to all of these employees.

- **Getting Along with Peers**

Students are expected to have pleasant working relationships with their fellow students. This includes an equitable sharing of the workload and helping and supporting each other.

If clerkship directors receive consistent complaints about a student in any of these areas, the student's grade may be affected. Serious documented problems with unprofessional or unethical behavior, in the judgment of the clerkship director, may result in a failing grade even if the student has passed the written or oral examinations and has otherwise satisfactory clinical ratings. In addition, consistent or serious complaints about unprofessional or unethical behavior may be reflected in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

There may be times when a student has a personal problem or a personality conflict that impairs his or her ability to function properly on the clerkship. It is the student's responsibility to promptly notify the clerkship director when this first occurs and not after the fact.

The Department of Pediatrics will strictly follow these guidelines. Also, the following is a list of additional attitudes that every physician should have and **for which each medical student will be evaluated in Pediatrics.**

Caring and compassionate
Commitment to work and learning
Ethical sensitivity
Moral integrity
Cultural sensitivity
Enthusiasm for patient care
Ability to work as a team member
Communication skills

The attending and supervising residents will monitor the students as they interact not only with the individuals giving them a grade, but with peers, parents, patients, ancillary health care workers and secretaries. Suitable evaluation questions they will be asking themselves will include:

1. Is the student sensitive to the concerns and needs of parents and patients regardless of their social background or financial status?
2. Does the student treat all members of the health care team with courtesy and as valuable human beings? Do they work hard, truly contributing to the efforts of the team, going beyond what is merely expected?
3. Is the student honest and sensitive to ethical issues?
4. Is the student enthusiastic - wanting to learn more, searching out diagnoses of the patient, and generally, enthusiastically involved in the medical care of patients? Does he/she actively seek out information to contribute to the educational experience of the team and improve the care of the patient?
5. Does the student demonstrate attitudes that enhance the clinical interaction with infants, children, adolescents and their families?

It is the positive answers to these questions that will **distinguish the "A" student from the average student** and will point out those individuals who will ultimately become the finest physicians.

Serious infraction of any of the above professional behaviors will result in automatic failure of the rotation no matter what the subjective evaluation or written final grades.