**Activity to help students understand professionalism**

We thread professionalism throughout our curriculum and talk about the APTA’s core values many times in many classes. Before students go out on their first clinical experience, I do an activity with them to help them identify appropriate behaviors in the clinic.

First, we discuss what each Core Value means. Each student has access on blackboard to the descriptions (but not examples) of Core Values on the APTA’s website to describe each core value: (all definitions below taken from: www.apta.org/documents/public/education/professionalism.pdf)

**Accountability:** Accountability is active acceptance of the responsibility for the diverse roles, obligations, and actions of the physical therapist including self- regulation and other behaviors that positively influence patient/client outcomes, the profession and the health needs of society.

**Altruism:** Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interest of patients/clients, thus assuming the fiduciary responsibility of placing the needs of the patient/client ahead of the physical therapist’s self interest.

**Compassion/ Caring:** Compassion is the desire to identify with or sense something of another’s experience; a precursor of caring. Caring is the concern, empathy, and consideration for the needs and values of others. In physician’s Core Values, have respect instead

**Excellence:** Excellence is physical therapy practice that consistently uses current knowledge and theory while understanding personal limits, integrates judgment and the patient/client perspective, embraces advancement, challenges mediocrity, and works toward development of new knowledge.

**Integrity:** Integrity is steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or professional standards; truthfulness, fairness, doing what you say you will do, and “speaking forth” about why you do what you do.

**Professional Duty:** Professional duty is the commitment to meeting one’s obligations to provide effective physical therapy services to patients/clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.

**Social Responsibility:** Social responsibility is the promotion of a mutual trust between the profession and the larger public that necessitates responding to societal needs for health and wellness.

After discussing what each Core Value means, I break the class into two sections. One stays in the room we have class in and the other goes to another room where another faculty member is stationed.

Each room has a poster hanging up for each Core Value. The 7 posters are blank except the name of the core value and are spaced around the room. Students are given markers to write on the posters. The students in one room have 2 minutes at each station to list examples of that Core Value in action. They need to be specific examples. For example, for accountability, one could write “The student always keeps notes for herself about patients inside a folder so no patients accidentally see information about other patients.” The students in the other room have 2 minutes at each station to list examples of students NOT demonstrating that Core Value. This goes on for 6 rounds. For the 7th and last round, the students have to circle what they think are the three best examples on that Core Value poster.

When we get back together, the group who was at each station last will read the top 3 examples to the class and we discuss then.

We then go over the professional behavior items on the CPI:

Professional Behavior

Accountability

Communication

Cultural Competence

Professional Development

5/18 items (all equally weighted)

28% of CPI grade is professional behavior!

Red Flag Items on the CPI:

3/5 are professional behavior! (60%)

I share well-written de-identified self-assessments from past students on the CPI to explore self-reflection of professional behavior.

The students then make three professional development goals to achieve over their four clinical experiences. I ask them to use Core Values as a guide and make an action plan to get there.

Here are two examples:

1. I will receive constructive feedback without reacting defensively 100% of the time. (Accountability)

Plan: I will try to envision the person giving feedback is talking about someone else to de-personalize it; I will remember that the feedback is to help me grow; I will ask my CI and others for feedback on my performance on a consistent basis

2. I will review at least one journal article a week that has to do with the patient population I am treating while I am on my clinical experiences (Excellence)

Plan: Set aside time to do this and put it in my calendar, make sure that I can log in to the USciences library system off campus

Submitted by:

Shelly Lewis, PT, DPT

Director of Clinical Education

Assistant Professor

University of the Sciences

[m.lewis@usciences.edu](mailto:m.lewis@usciences.edu)

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