

Student Code of Conduct

Faculty of Medicine University of Colombo

Society accords certain rights and privileges to medical students over and above other students. With these rights and privileges, the society expects certain obligations from medical students. These obligations can be turned into a set of standards (or best practices or a code of conduct) that would guide the conduct of all medical students. It is easier to visualize these standards or best practices in terms of the exit learning outcomes that the students need to achieve. Following are the best practices that Faculty of Medicine, University Colombo expects that its students would comply with.

- I. Clinical skills (history taking, physical examination)
 1. Whenever possible practise clinical skills on patients after practising under simulated conditions
 2. Be aware that patient needs should come first when practising clinical skills
 3. Take the seriousness of the illness of the patient into consideration, before deciding to practise clinical skills
 4. Practise clinical skills with minimal discomfort to the patient
 5. Respect patient rights when practising clinical skills
 6. Be sensitive to the patient's social, cultural and religious norms when practising clinical skills
 7. Always take patient consent before intimate examination
 8. Always have a chaperone when practising physical examination on a patient of the opposite gender
- II. Patient management (including practical procedures, investigations and therapeutic skills)
 9. Perform only the procedures that you are confident on a patient
 10. Always seek appropriate supervision if you think necessary, especially when performing invasive procedures
 11. Always respect the rights and consent of the patient, when conducting practical procedures
 12. Be aware that decisions about patients are taken only by appropriately qualified staff
 13. Respect patient feelings and ideas when discussing decisions
 14. Always have a chaperone when conducting a procedure on a patient of the opposite gender
 15. Take all precautions necessary to minimize both discomfort and complications/side effects to the patient
- III. Health promotion and disease prevention (including the ability to function within the healthcare system)
 16. Seek every opportunity to provide health related advice to patients
 17. Know your limits when giving health related advice to patients

18. Always think about how best the patient can be managed when s/he returns to the community from hospital setting
 19. Use every opportunity to actively participate in health promotion programmes
 20. Lead a healthy life by example, by refraining from unhealthy lifestyle practices; e.g. smoking, alcohol, sedentary lifestyle, promiscuity, drug abuse
- IV. Medico-legal duties
21. Be aware of the law of the land and abide by it at all times
 22. Reckon that if you are granted special privileges, they should not be at the expense of the law and order of the country
 23. Be aware that it is illegal to practise medicine without appropriate supervision (e.g. set up a practice or practise medicine alone) until you are fully registered with the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC)
 24. Abide by the rules of the profession as spelled out by the SLMC and other authorities
 25. Be aware that attending to a patient enters you (and your supervising authority) into a legal contract with the patient
 26. Copying at examinations is an offence
 27. All types of records could be legal documents; hence know how to use them
 28. Follow the legal requirements when dealing with minors and mentally ill
- V. Scientific basis of practice (knowledge of basic, clinical and social sciences)
29. Always try to find out the scientific, clinical or social reasons behind a particular practice or a phenomenon
 30. Try to work out a given phenomenon from the basic principles
 31. Refresh the basic principles whenever there is an opportunity
 32. Be up to date
- VI. Communication and interpersonal skills
33. Develop language skills to speak the language of the patient
 34. If you cannot speak the language of the patient, always find an alternative when speaking with a patient who speaks a language that you are not conversant with
 35. Practice and develop non-verbal communication, as much as verbal communication
 36. Be aware that written communication (documentation) is as important as oral communication. Develop the habit of making detailed notes and documenting details
 37. Develop the skills of public speaking and patient presentations
 38. Follow the accepted norms when communicating with staff members of the university
 39. Develop appropriate language skills to speak appropriately with other members of the healthcare team
 40. Never use abusive language either to patients or to members of the healthcare team
 41. Follow the acceptable ethical guidelines when communicating electronically, including via social media
 42. Respect the right of the patient to receive information, in a language that is readily understandable; i.e. devoid of jargon
 43. Respect the dignity and rights of the possible affected parties when communicating with public media

- VII. Teamwork and leadership
 - 44. Always respect other members of the healthcare team
 - 45. Appreciate the role of the medical student in a healthcare team and abide by it
 - 46. Be aware that learning in teams require mutual respect
 - 47. Always share resources
 - 48. Give leadership to and/or participate in lawful student activities as appropriate
 - 49. Use extra-curricular activities to build the attributes of teamwork and leadership
 - 50. Be prepared to take different roles in a team as appropriate
 - 51. Respect the skills and contributions of other colleagues
- VIII. Planning, critical thinking and analysis (including research)
 - 52. Try to arrive at a diagnosis (or differential diagnosis) at every patient encounter, whenever possible
 - 53. View each issue or practice that you come across with an open mind
 - 54. Always view problems broadly and as entities that have more than one solution
 - 55. Appreciate that each issue or event may have several explanations and implications
 - 56. Do not jump into conclusions without adequate consideration of all possibilities
 - 57. View evidence critically and try to find out its applicability to the local context
- IX. Ethics, attitudes and professionalism
 - 58. Do not disadvantage (or discriminate) patients based on their race, religion, gender, political beliefs or socio-economic background
 - 59. Always take the consent of the patient before practising clinical skills or invasive procedures
 - 60. When visiting patients' homes take every precaution to minimize any inconvenience to the patient and the family
 - 61. Know your limits of ability at all times when interacting with patients, and in case, if the patient needs help beyond you can offer, try to address such patient needs problems/concerns by channeling the patient to an appropriate staff member
 - 62. At all times, the patient needs should come first, over and above the opportunity that you will get to learn from the patient
 - 63. Trust and respect other healthcare professionals
 - 64. Never enter into intimate relationships with patients
 - 65. Never enter into intimate relationships with other members of the healthcare team during working hours
 - 66. Try to uphold the highest standards and norms of research ethics
 - 67. Avoid plagiarism¹ at all times
 - 68. Bring unethical practices to the notice of the authorities at all times
 - 69. Practise 'whistle blowing'², where appropriate, but only as the last resort. The purpose of whistle blowing should be correcting an anomaly, rather than tarnishing the image of the institute or a person
 - 70. Uphold the dignity of the profession at all times by not entering into illegal or unethical activities
 - 71. Never criticize another professional in an inappropriate forum
 - 72. Be mindful about patient confidentiality at all times

1. Plagiarism is interpreted as reproduction or use of another's work without appropriate acknowledgement.

2. Whistle blowing is interpreted as public disclosure of mismanagement, corruption, illegality or any wrong doing.

73. Make personal hygiene and personal safety always a priority
74. Ensure that you are clearly identified as a student when dealing with patients, other healthcare professionals and the public at large – never pretend to be a qualified professional
75. Dress appropriately to suit the occasion
76. Be punctual
77. Use any given opportunity to develop and practise empathy as an essential attribute in patient care
78. Be open and honest at all times
79. Bring to the notice of the authorities any incapacity of yours, if it affects the health of the patients
80. Bring to the notice of the authorities any incapacities of others, particularly if they affect patient care
81. If any circumstance (e.g. illness) prevents you from attending course work notify the relevant authorities (e.g. the University Medical Officer in the case of illness and the Deputy or Assistant registrar in the case of other circumstances)
82. Be sensitive to the requirements of differently-abled persons, and where possible try to assist them in carrying out their work
83. Co-exist harmoniously with others of different ethnic, racial, religious and political backgrounds, without involving in factional warfare
84. Look after the facilities and amenities provided by the university and try to hand them over to future students in good condition
85. Help the authorities to keep the university (including hostels) and hospital environment clean
86. Refrain from either indulging in or abetting (explicitly or implicitly) any form of ragging (physical, verbal or psychological) both in and out of the university
- X. Lifelong learning and continuing professional development
 87. Use reflective practice to identify aspects that could be improved in your learning or practice
 88. Know the opportunities/resources available to advance knowledge, skills and attitudes
 89. Be positive towards continuing professional development and assimilate the necessary skills required for the same
 90. Be aware of the teaching and learning opportunities (i.e. teaching and learning methods) and resources available and take the maximum use of all such opportunities and resources
 91. Prepare appropriately before attending teaching and learning sessions
 92. Attend all teaching and learning sessions with diligence
 93. Complete and submit course work on time
 94. Do not only rely on study leave period to prepare for examinations; prepare for examinations during course work
 95. Consider learning and improving on generic skills such as English language skills, and information technology and computer skills as a priority

96. Always seek feedback from tutors, superiors, peers and even juniors/subordinates
97. Be prepared to receive criticism with an open mind
98. Reflect on feedback and criticism to plan the next steps for improvement
99. Be self-critical on whether improvement in any ability of yours is applied appropriately
100. Be responsible for your own learning
101. Accept error, even before it is pointed out by others, and try to remedy it
102. Consider teaching and learning from others (i.e. peer learning) as a useful skill
103. Know where to seek support, if necessary; e.g. academic counseling services, mentors, personal tutors
104. Be aware of the career opportunities available.