

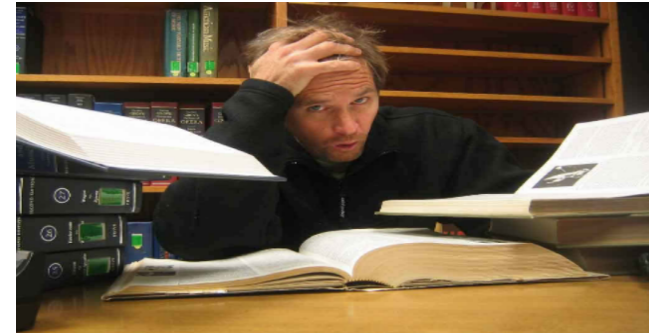
Ethical responsibilities of physicians

Duties of physicians:

- Toward the community.**
- Towards his profession.**
- Toward patient:** (physician-patient relationship).
- Toward colleagues:** (physician – physician relationship).

1. Duties of physicians towards the community.

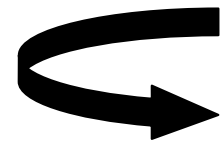
- ❑ Protect public health by **reporting diseases** as Required by law to the responsible authority.
- ❑ Respect the law and **participate in activities** contributing to an improved community, correct deficiencies in availability, accessibility and quality of health services.
- ❑ Helping all persons to get their health care.
- ❑ Helping the community to recognize and deal with social & Environmental causes of disease.



2. Duties of the physician towards the profession

1-To respect the dignity of his profession:

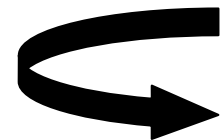
- ❑ By being **honest**, **correct** and **accurate** in his work and he **has not to join any job** beside medicine except **teaching and governmental professions** .
- ❑ He should not use his name for **trading medications** or for commercial purposes.
- ❑ He has not to **use agents** to get more patients.
- ❑ He should **not sell** any medical samples.



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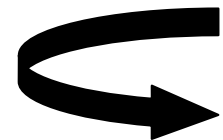
- 2- He should be honest, accurate and correct in writing any medical report or certificate.***
- 3- He should be reasonable in his financial relation with patients according to the fees put by the medical syndicate***
- 4- A physician is advised to use great caution in divulging (announcing) discoveries or new techniques of treatment. He has to use the scientific procedures and should follow the normal legal channels to advertise the results of his medical research. The research should be accepted by a respectable medical periodical journal and accepted by the authorities***



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5-His clinic should be fulfill certain criteria

- **Good aeration and illumination**
- **Reasonable furniture**
- **Good equipment**
- **Good medical records and filling system**

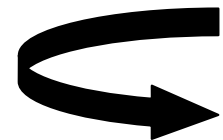


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6-Advertising himself and his clinic should be gained out of his good reputation between his patients and colleagues and his scientific knowledge and skills. He has not to use non-ethical methods like agents.

Advertising through media has rules (in newspapers for 2 weeks in the following situations):

- On opening his clinic
- On changing the address
- On any promotion
- On changing the time- table or schedule
- On leaving the town for more than a month



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- *The label on the clinic should be of a reasonable size without decoration and including the exact qualification and post of the physician. Any addition e.g. unreal specialty mentioned in it is considered forgery by law.*
- *The practitioner must be careful not to do effort to attract patient to himself, such by giving **interviews to the lay press** or by **writing articles** on medical subjects for the lay press. However it may be quite legal to publish articles or deliver lecture on topics of general medical interest.*
- *Professional cards should not be exhibited in public places.*

(Resume): Towards his profession

- 1- Continuing profession **development**.
- 2- **Avoid** talking about discoveries or new techniques or treatment through non-professional channels .(should be accepted by medical periodical journal & accepted by the authorities.
- 3- Respect the **dignity** of his profession
4. **Avoid** unethical conduct: as selling medical samples

3. Duties of physicians toward patient: (physician-patient relationship).



Physician should:

- Owe his patients **complete loyalty** and all the resources of his science.
- **Summon another physician** who has the necessary ability. **يستدعى**
- Observe **absolute confidentiality** even after the patient has died.
- Provide the patient with **information** necessary to explain why physician recommendation ought to be followed.

The patient is

Obligated **to participate and cooperate** in the treatment and to follow reasonable instructions for further evaluation and treatment.

Duties of the physician towards the patients

- 1- He should be in good and kind relation with the patients.***
- 2- He has to do his utmost for caring of his patient. He should respect the patient's life, trying always to protect not to harm it and to reduce the patients pains.***
- 3- The physician must support the dignity of all persons without differentiation between them (social, economic, financial, religious and personal factors)***

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4-Continuous medical education is essential and he should use recent technology which will help in diagnosis and treatment.

5-If he is unable for any reason to give the considerable care to the patient, he should ask for consultation of one of his colleagues.

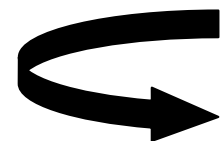
6-He has not to divulge the patient's secrets.

7-If the patient or his family ask for consultation of another physician he should obey their wish.



Duties of the physician towards the patients (continued)

8- A doctor cannot be forced to treat any person, but having once accepted the case he must continue to treat him until other assistance can be obtained.



Termination of the physician- patient relationship:

- (1) Completion of the treatment by **patient recovery**.
- (2) The **patient may unilaterally** terminate the relationship for any reason and at any time.
- (3) Patient's care has completely **transferred to another physician**.

Abandonment:

The unilateral severance of the physician-patient relationship by the physician at a time when continued medical care is still necessary.

- (a) The physician intends to terminate the relationship **without** the patient consent.
- (b) Physician failure to attend the patient **as frequently as** treatment would demand, this is referred to as "constructive abandonment."

4. Duties of physicians t owards colleagues: (physician – physician relationship).



Physician should not:

- 1) **Criticize** the treatment of his colleague.
- 2) Trying to replace another colleague in the **treatment of a patient**.
- 3) Gaining personal benefit by **replacing a colleague in his clinic**.
- 4) **Refusing** to attend and treat a fellow colleague or any of his relatives to whom he is responsible.
- 5) **Accept any fees** for the treatment of fellow colleague of any or his relatives to whom he is responsible.

Duties of the physician towards his colleagues.

- 1-There should be good cooperation and respect between the colleagues.**
- 2-A physician should not criticize other physician .**
- 3-He has not to open a clinic in the same building with a physician of the same specialty except after taking permission of the medical syndicate and the physician himself.**



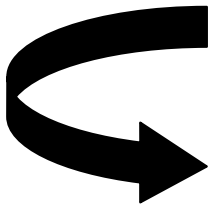
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4-He has not to compete with physicians by increasing or decreasing the fees than the range accepted by the medical syndicate.

5-He should not take fees when examining and treating a physician or his family or medical students.

6-When replacing a physician in his clinic, he must not entice **جذب (=take) patients from his colleagues .**



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7-On consultation :

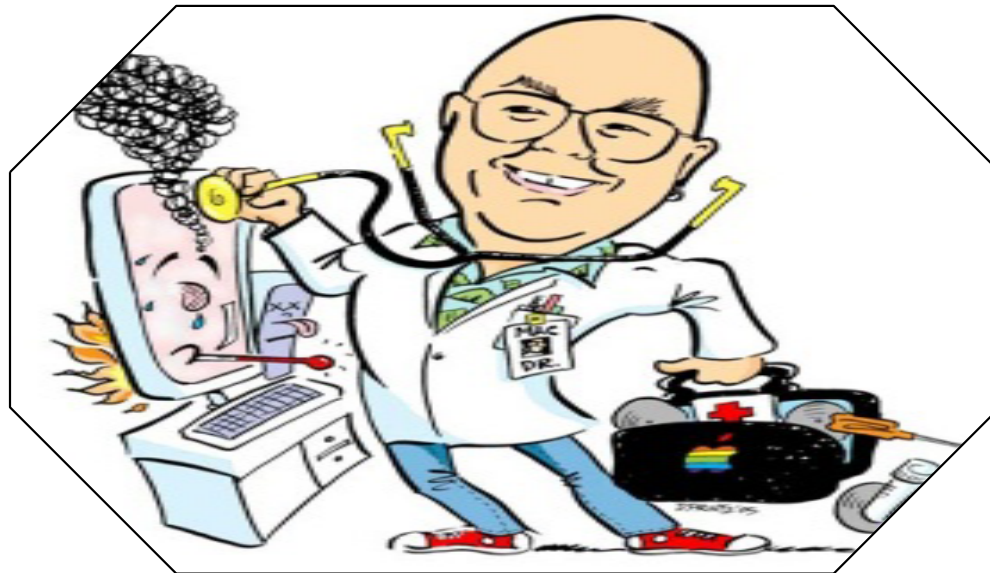
- ?** *If the patient is coming to his clinic while he was treated by another physician, there is no obligations to consult the previous one.*

- ?** *If he is asked to visit a patient that has been treated by another physician he should ask the patient to consult this physician except when the patient refuses.*

- ?** *He has to obey the wish of the patient and his family if they ask for another opinion.*

- ?** *If there is any disagreement he may leave the other physician to continue treatment of the case*

Case- studies



CASE STUDY

- **Dr. C, a newly appointed anesthesiologist in a city hospital, is alarmed by the behavior of the senior surgeon in the operating room. The surgeon uses out-of-date techniques that prolong operations and result in greater post-operative pain and longer recovery times. Moreover, he makes frequent crude jokes about the patients that obviously bother the assisting nurses. As a more junior staff member, Dr. C is reluctant to criticize the surgeon personally or to report him to higher authorities. However, he feels that he must do something to improve the situation.**
- Does Dr. C, have the right to be worry about the behavior of the senior surgeon in the operating room and to criticize him and why?
- Does Dr. C, have the right to do something?
- If yes, what he should do ?

- Dr. C is right to be worried by the behavior of the senior surgeon in the operating room. Not only is he endangering the health of the patient but he is being disrespectful to both the patient and his colleagues. Dr. C has an ethical duty not to ignore this behavior but to do something about it.
 - **As a first step, he should not indicate any support for the offensive behavior, for example, by laughing at the jokes.**
 - **If he thinks that discussing the matter with the surgeon might be effective, he should go ahead and do this.**
 - **Otherwise, he may have to go directly to higher authorities in the hospital. If they are unwilling to deal with the situation, then he can approach the appropriate physician licensing body and ask it to investigate.**

- **The plaintiff employed the physician to attend his sick child. The physician examined the patient and diagnosed the illness as scarlet fever. The following day the physician was requested to call and see the child again, and he did not do so, making the statement that the disease must run its course. Subsequently several other requests were made to the doctor to call on the patient. Finally, in response to an urgent appeal, he did visit the patient. The child died shortly after his arrival.**

Questions:

- **What are the ethical issues in this case?**
- **Was anyone in this case being unethical? Who ?**

Thank you

