Public and patient expectations of professionalism

Facilitated by Professor Jonathan Cowpe, Association for Dental Education in Europe

Nikki Patel, Chair, BDA Young Dentist Committee

Michaela ONeill, Vice President, International Federation of Dental Hygiene

Rebecca Addis [or] Rachel Lopata, Director, Community Research

Simon Morrow, Council Member, General Dental Council



Where Does Professional Life End and Private Life Begin? Is there an overlap?

'As a healthcare professional you are never really "off duty"

'.... we are all human and we do have lives outside of the surgery' DCPS

'If you are not breaking the law you should be free to do what you like in your free time' 'People's personal and private lives are separate... as long as there is no impact on your ability to do your job!'

Dentists

'if you exhibit unprofessional behaviour it doesn't matter where you are. It speaks to your intrinsic character'

Patients

'.. I would like to think that the health professionals would have enough integrity and pride in their chosen profession to behave consistently well whether in public or not'

'I want my dentist to do good dentistry, not be a paragon of virtue'

'Just because they're a dentist doesn't mean they shouldn't relax'

'I believe that anything done outside of workplace has nothing to do with your "professionalism" at work if you can carry out your job effectively'







Expectation of Dental Team Members – Are they at variance?

'All dental team members should uphold the same standards to maintain trust in the profession'

'It varies if it is a dentist or a nurse or a receptionist'

'All GDC registrants should be viewed equal - re professionalism'

DCPS

'Different requirements for clinicians and assisting staff... who have very different responsibility and rewards'

Patients

"... We are all members of a professional body and are expected to behave in an acceptable manner no matter what our position"

Dentists

'Lower levels of 'professional ism'... junior members and younger dentists' 'Everyone within a profession that involves working with the public has a shared responsibility to promote professionalism and respect in the workplace. From receptionist to hygienist to dental nurse, dentist, practice managers' 'My expectations... of professional behaviour ... higher for the dentist than others in the team'







Who decides/influences what is professional/unprofessional? What is the role of the regulator and the profession?

'.... GDC should not get involved in the personal life of registrants unless there is a criminal conviction for a serious matter'

DCPS

'Dental professionals are human beings with all the vices and virtues of the rest of the population. Because theyare regulated does not mean they could or should behave like robots'

Dentists

'I work well within the GDC standards I like having the structure, do think sometimes recommendations need to be more 'open' and 'realistic'

'... GDC judges' actions of dental professionals much more harshly than the same actions are judged by other regulators'

Patients

No particularly relevant response from the public







How do the standards of professionalism expected in dentistry compare with other professions?

'Dentists are required to display higher standards of professionalism by the GDC than doctors are by the GMC.'

'Because of the treatment/cost options, extra care needs to be taken to give patient choice and explanation of what these costs may involve and why'

'we are far more regulated, regulated is good as long as it really is best for the patient and realistic'

DCPS

'all medical/dental professionals should be held to the same standard'

Dentists

'it feels like we are held to a higher standard than other professionals in public life' 'dentists are highly trained and high-ranking professionals - where trust is paramount.'

"...standards expected aren't any different to that expected of a doctor, but perhaps higher than that expected of a lawyer or other allied health professionals"

Patients

'Standards in dentistry seem to be unrealistic and overly prescriptive' 'standards of professionalism expected, extend to other public service professions, including doctors, nurses, teachers etc.'





