Objective

- Understand the need for exemplifying professionalism in both the physical and online realms
- Understand your legal and ethical rights and obligations in the electronic space
- Identify areas of liability when having an online relationship with a patient
- Understand the permanency of your online actions

Does this sound familiar?

Nothing wrong with that, right?

Definition

- E-professionalism is…
  - “…the attitudes and behaviors (some of which may occur in private settings) reflecting traditional professionalism paradigms that are manifested through digital media.”

Consider

- Medical Professionalism is…
  - “…the ability to subordinate one’s self-interest to that of the patient, the adherence to high ethical and moral standards, an appropriate response to societal needs, and the practice of humanism including empathy, integrity, altruism, and trustworthiness”

Consider

- Professionalism is…
  - Situational
  - Generational
  - Cultural
  - Evolving
  - Internally held beliefs but externally exhibited behaviors
Who should you associate with online?

- Context
  - Facebook
  - LinkedIn
  - Snapchat
  - Twitter
  - Email

Who should you associate with online?

- Person
  - High school friend
  - Family member
  - Co-worker
  - Pharmacy school classmate
  - Employer/boss
  - Professor
  - Patient
  - Medical resident
  - Attending

Who should you associate with online?

- Friend requests from your patients
  - Medical students – 1.2%
  - Residents – 7.8%
  - Physician – 34.5%
  - Pharmacists?

Who should you associate with online?

- Implications?
  - Compromise the provider-patient relationship
  - Privacy concerns
  - Therapeutic relationship becomes personal
  - “Catch” patient going against recommendations
  - Can you appropriately treat a patient when you find these things?
  - Patient exhibits warning signs
  - What if a patient asks for advice?

Who should you associate with online?

- Professors
  - Define the relationship
  - Not viewed as a peer
  - Faculty obligation to uphold honor code
  - Relationship with other students
  - Conflict of interests

Historical perspective

- 51% of pharmacy schools have had reported incidences of unprofessional content posted online
- Disciplinary actions ranged from informal warnings to suspension

“ I DO NOT LIKE THE CONE OF SHAME.”
Compare yourself

- 36-45% of 1st year students have information they would not like their employer to see
- Nearly 70% of pharmacy students believe if the public saw their social media profile, the reputation of pharmacy students would be compromised.

Legal implications

- First Amendment: freedom of speech
- Fourth Amendment: no unlawful search and seizure
  - Right to gain access to social media accounts
- Fifth Amendment: right to due process (right to remain silent)
- Fourteenth Amendment: right of non-citizens to due process

Legal precedent

- Yoder v. University of Louisville
  - Nursing student expelled for violating the honor code of the school of nursing
  - Posted caustic and profane observations on race, sex, and religion on MySpace about patients she had encountered.

What puts the “professional” in professionalism?

JUDGMENT

Professionalism also includes

- Attitudes
- Behaviors
- Actions

These three things describe how we are perceived as individuals.
Beliefs  Behaviors

You online
- Presentation online = image offline
- You are responsible for what you say online AND what others say about/with you!
- It is permanent

A higher standard
- Protect your reputation and your license
- Manage your personal image online
  - www.Reppler.com
  - www.simplewa.sh/facebook#
- Not about censorship but congruence of beliefs and actions

Take home points…
- Use judgment
- Possible legal consequences of your actions
- Professionalism is seen through the eyes of the beholder
- Pharmacy is a small world. Put your best foot forward every day
- Being a licensed professional means being held to a higher standard than the general public

Questions?

References