

incorporate differences in perspectives, values, or beliefs into the care plan. Significant conflicts may arise because religious or cultural practices may lead to the possibility of child abuse and neglect. In this circumstance, the pediatrician is required by law to report the suspected child abuse and neglect to the appropriate social service authorities (see Chapter 22).

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practices constitute a part of the broad cultural perspective. Therapeutic modalities for CAM include biochemical, lifestyle, biomechanical, and bioenergetic treatments, as well as homeopathy. It is estimated that 20% to 30% of all children and 50% to 75% of adolescents use CAM. Of children with chronic illness, 30% to 70% use CAM therapies, especially for asthma and cystic fibrosis. Only 30% to 60% of children and families tell their physicians about their use of CAM. Some modalities may be effective, whereas others may be ineffective or even dangerous.

## Chapter 2

# PROFESSIONALISM

## CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONALISM

Society provides a profession with economic, political, and social rewards. Professions have specialized knowledge and the potential to maintain a monopoly on power and control, remaining relatively autonomous. The profession's autonomy can be limited by societal needs. A profession exists as long as it fulfills its responsibilities for the social good.

Today the activities of medical professionals are subject to explicit public rules of accountability. Governmental and other authorities grant limited autonomy to the professional organizations and their membership. City and municipal government departments of public health establish and implement health standards and regulations. At the state level, boards of registration in medicine establish the criteria for obtaining and revoking medical licenses. The federal government regulates the standards of services, including Medicare, Medicaid, and the Food and Drug Administration. The Department of Health and Human Services regulates physician behavior in conducting research with the goal of protecting human subjects. The Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986 authorized the federal government to establish the National Practitioner Data Bank, which contains information about physicians (and other health care practitioners) who have been disciplined by a state licensing board, professional society, hospital, or health plan or named in medical malpractice judgments or settlements. Hospitals are required to review information in this data bank every 2 years as part of clinician recredentialing. There are accrediting agencies for medical schools, such as the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), and postgraduate training, such as the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The ACGME includes committees that review subspecialty training programs.

Historically the most privileged professions have depended on their legitimacy for serving the public interest. The public trust of physicians is based on the physician's commitment to altruism. Many medical schools include variations on the traditional Hippocratic Oath as part of the commencement ceremonies as a recognition of a physician's responsibility to put the interest of others ahead of self-interest.

The core of professionalism is embedded in the daily healing work of the physician and encompassed in the patient-physician relationship. Professionalism includes an appreciation for the cultural and religious/spiritual health beliefs of the patient, incorporating the ethical and moral values of the profession and the moral values of the patient. Unfortunately, the inappropriate actions of a few practicing physicians, physician investigators, and physicians in positions of power in the corporate world have created a societal demand to punish those involved and have led to the erosion of respect for the medical profession.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP), the American Board of Internal Medicine, the LCME, the Medical School Objectives Project of the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the ACGME Outcome Project have called for increasing attention to professionalism in the practice of medicine and in the education of physicians.

## PROFESSIONALISM FOR PEDIATRICIANS

The ABP adopted professional standards in 2000, and the AAP updated the policy statement and technical report on Professionalism in 2007, as follows:

- **Honesty/integrity** is the consistent regard for the highest standards of behavior and the refusal to violate one's personal and professional codes. Maintaining integrity requires awareness of situations that may result in conflict of interest or that may result in personal gain at the expense of the best interest of the patient.
- **Reliability/responsibility** includes accountability to one's patients and their families, to society to ensure that the public's needs are addressed, and to the profession to ensure that the ethical precepts of practice are upheld. Inherent in this responsibility is reliability in completing assigned duties or fulfilling commitments. There also must be a willingness to accept responsibility for errors.
- **Respect for others** is the essence of humanism. The pediatrician must treat all persons with respect and regard for their individual worth and dignity; be aware of emotional, personal, family, and cultural influences on a patient's well being, rights, and choices of medical care; and respect appropriate patient confidentiality.
- **Compassion/empathy** is a crucial component of medical practice. The pediatrician must listen attentively, respond humanely to the concerns of patients and family members, and provide appropriate empathy for and relief of pain, discomfort, and anxiety as part of daily practice.
- **Self-improvement** is the pursuit of and commitment to providing the highest quality of health care through lifelong learning and education. The pediatrician must seek to learn from errors and aspire to excellence through self-evaluation and acceptance of the critiques of others.
- **Self-awareness/knowledge of limits** includes recognition of the need for guidance and supervision when faced with new or complex responsibilities. The pediatrician