

Development of a professionalism committee approach to address unprofessional medical staff behavior at an academic medical center.

May 30, 2014

Speck RM, Foster JJ, Mulhern VA, et al. Development of a professionalism committee approach to address unprofessional medical staff behavior at an academic medical center. *Jt Comm J Qual Patient Saf.* 2014;40(4):161-167.

<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/development-professionalism-committee-approach-address-unprofessional-medical-staff-behavior>

[Unprofessional behavior](#) can [hinder patient safety](#) and create a disruptive work environment for other staff. The Joint Commission [requires](#) that organizations have clear processes for detecting and reporting unacceptable behaviors. This commentary describes the development and experience of a Professionalism Committee at the University of Pennsylvania Health System. The committee chair serves as the first point of contact for any behavioral concerns. In this system, the committee chair is a trained psychiatrist, which the authors argue is an important aspect of the program since it allows for early identification of behavioral health issues that could contribute to unprofessionalism. The article includes the specific problems addressed and the referral outcomes of 79 cases over 2 years, along with 3 illustrative case vignettes. A prior AHRQ WebM&M [commentary](#) focused on the importance of professionalism in patient safety, and an AHRQ WebM&M [perspective](#) reviewed strategies to identify and manage problem behaviors.