



Foundations *of* Professionalism



Professionalism in Action: A Checklist for Dentists

Professionalism is the cornerstone of patient-centered dental care. As you navigate clinical decisions and actions, use this checklist to ensure your actions align with the core principles and duties of professionalism.

Please note this checklist does not capture all the principles and duties that dentists are expected to understand and uphold. Refer to the **[Foundations of Professionalism](#)** document for more information.



Patient Autonomy

Respecting patient choices

- ☐ Am I fully present, focused and responsive during patient interactions?
- ☐ Have I provided clear, accurate and understandable information?
- ☐ Am I encouraging shared decision-making with patients or their authorized representatives?
- ☐ Have I answered questions patients or their authorized representatives have about their dental care?
- ☐ Have I obtained informed consent in accordance with legal and professional obligations?
- ☐ Is my care patient-centered?



Beneficence

Doing good

- ☐ Am I acting in the best interests of the patient's health and wellbeing?
- ☐ Do I treat others with kindness, compassion and respect?
- ☐ Am I collaborating effectively with other health care professionals to support continuity of care?
- ☐ Have I provided or facilitated access to emergency care when needed?
- ☐ Am I contributing to initiatives that improve oral health in my community?
- ☐ Am I open, receptive and committed to understanding emerging issues?



Nonmaleficence

Doing no harm

- ☐ Am I complying with all legal, ethical and professional obligations?
- ☐ Is the information I provide about myself and my practice truthful and accurate?
- ☐ Do I take responsibility for my actions, decisions and competence?
- ☐ Am I maintaining my professional competence and referring patients when necessary?
- ☐ Are patients' best interests guiding how I manage conflicts of interest?
- ☐ Are patients' best interests guiding my clinical and administrative decisions?
- ☐ Am I maintaining appropriate boundaries in professional relationships?
- ☐ Do I communicate objectively about other professionals' services?
- ☐ Am I using technology responsibly and ethically?
- ☐ Have I disclosed any harm that patients have experienced during care?
- ☐ Have I made any required mandatory reports?
- ☐ Have I raised concerns about inappropriate, unprofessional or otherwise concerning behaviour of staff or colleagues?
- ☐ Am I balancing personal and professional priorities to maintain my own wellbeing?



Justice

Being fair

- ☐ Am I complying with human rights and accessibility laws?
- ☐ Are my services and administrative decisions free from prejudice and discrimination?
- ☐ Am I promoting fair and equitable access to oral health care for all?
- ☐ Do I recognize and mitigate bias in my professional relationships and care?
- ☐ Am I aware of power dynamics and taking steps to empower others?
- ☐ Do I recognize the unique opportunities and barriers each person experiences, and take reasonable steps to provide appropriate support?
- ☐ Am I addressing determinants of health and supporting efforts to reduce health inequities?

Contact us

If you have questions about professionalism, contact the College's Practice Advisory Service at practiceadvisory@rcdso.org or call **1-800-565-4591**.