

# Professionalism in Dialysis Care



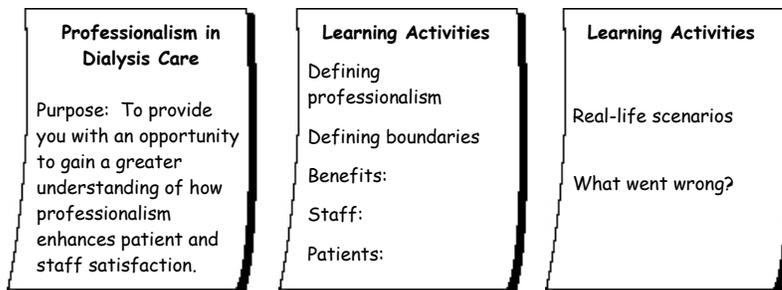
## TIME REQUIRED

**45 minutes**  
(55 minutes if optional pre-test and post-test are conducted)



## PREPARATION/MATERIALS NEEDED

- Set up training space. The training room can be set up in many different ways. The recommended arrangement is a circle or a U shape so that participants can see and interact with one another.
- Pens, pencils, paper for participants.
- Name tags and index cards.
- Case scenario cards (found at the back of this module). Photocopy each scenario as a handout or write scenarios on index cards (1 scenario card for each pair of participants).
- Blank flip chart for taking group notes. If no flip chart is available, then use blank 8 ½ x 11 inch paper or a dry-erase board.
- Prepare and post the following information well before the participants enter the room (see diagram below):
  - ◆ Module title
  - ◆ Purpose of training
  - ◆ Learning activities, including definitions, benefits to staff and patients, and group discussions



- Optional: Photocopy pre/post-tests; 2 copies per participant.

## Welcome and Statement of Purpose

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(5 minutes)

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Welcome to the training on Professionalism in Dialysis Care. You'll see here that I've written the purpose of today's training on the flip chart.*

Trainer notes printed in italics should be stated

*The purpose of the training is to provide you with an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of how professionalism enhances patient satisfaction and staff satisfaction. In addition, we'll discuss, as a group, what professionalism means to those of us working in dialysis care, including technicians, nephrologists, nurses, receptionists and the entire care team. We'll also define professionalism and setting boundaries. Finally, we'll take a look at real-life scenarios when professionalism was forgotten and boundaries were crossed.*

## Optional: Pre-test

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(5 minutes)

Hand out 1 pre-test sheet per participant. Explain that this pre-test will allow you to assess whether the training is successful. Allow participants to work for a few minutes. Collect all sheets.

## Defining Professionalism in Dialysis Care

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(15 minutes)

**Trainer** states out loud:

*So let's start by seeing how the dictionary defines professionalism. The Merriam-Webster dictionary states that:*

*Professionalism is a way of exhibiting a courteous, conscientious and generally businesslike manner in the workplace.*

*So let's think for a moment as a group. How do we exhibit or show that we are courteous, conscientious and businesslike at work? Just say your idea out loud and I'll post it here on the flip chart. Let's start with courteous. How do we show that we are courteous to our patients?*



Listen for, and post, answers like:

- We use Mr., Mrs., Ms. or Miss with the patient's last name unless they have given us permission to use their first name.
- We don't use nicknames, especially those that could make a patient feel dependent or like a child, e.g., baby, honey and sweetie.
- We use Mr., Mrs., Ms. or Miss with other staff persons, especially when we are talking to them in front of patients.
- We say please and thank-you to all patients, other staff, visitors and family members.
- We treat patients with respect and pride and we work to make the dialysis experience as dignified as possible.
- We introduce ourselves to new patients and tell them what our position is on the dialysis unit.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Those are good descriptions of what it means to be courteous on the unit. Now let's look at conscientious. How do we show that we are doing our job in a conscientious way?*



Listen for, and post, answers like:

- We show up for work on time.
- We come to work, ready to work.
- We don't talk about our personal life on the floor, to other staff members or to the patient.
- We don't talk over the patient as if he is not there.
- We don't talk about other patients or staff in front of other patients.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Right. You all came up with a good list of what it means to be conscientious. Now let's finish our definition and take a look at having a **businesslike manner**. We know that a dialysis unit is not a typical business, but it is a business and our customers/consumers are the patients. So how do we show our patients our **businesslike manner**?*



Listen for, and post, answers like:

- ◆ We dress appropriately for work.
- ◆ We groom appropriately for work—including nails, hair, makeup, jewelry, perfume, cologne, after-shave, etc.
- ◆ We keep the noise level quiet and peaceful.
- ◆ We make the patient as comfortable as possible.
- ◆ We don't keep the patient waiting without explaining why.
- ◆ We make sure we have all of the equipment we need ready to go when the patient arrives.
- ◆ We make sure that the patient care area is clean and free of visible blood.
- ◆ We keep relationship boundaries in place.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Right. You all know what a businesslike manner is!*

*We also mentioned in this last discussion the importance of keeping relationship boundaries in place. Boundaries are a very important part of professionalism. Boundaries keep the relationship between the caregiver and patient both appropriate and safe. You can think of a boundary as an invisible line that should not be crossed.*

*Examples of keeping clear boundaries include:*

- ✎ *No dating between staff and patients.*
- ✎ *Staff and patients should not lend/borrow money to/from each other.*
- ✎ *Don't discuss aspects of your personal life with your patients.*
- ✎ *Don't accept tips, money or gifts.*
- ✎ *Don't touch patients inappropriately.*
- ✎ *Don't invade the patient's physical space.*

*Behaving courteously, conscientiously and in a businesslike manner keeps the boundaries clear and secure. Boundaries protect all of us from misunderstandings. As soon as we start acting too familiar with our patients—calling them by a nickname, or talking about them like they are not even there—the boundaries start to shift or even crumble.*

Check this section and add any cultural differences you might see at your facility.



## Benefits of Professionalism

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5 minutes

**Trainer** states out loud:

*You could say, based on our discussion just now, that professionalism is a lot of hard work! And sometimes it is. Especially when we're in a hurry, overloaded or just plain tired. But it has its payoff or benefits, for both the patient and the staff. Let's think for a moment about how professionalism benefits the staff person and the patient.*

*Let's start with the staff person. How does professionalism benefit staff? Share your answers out loud and I'll post them here on the flip chart.*



Listen for, and post, any of the following answers:

- ◆ Professionalism makes us feel good.
- ◆ It makes us feel that our job is very important.
- ◆ It makes us feel in control.
- ◆ It gives us a code of conduct so we know what is expected of us.
- ◆ It builds confidence in us as dialysis technicians.
- ◆ It promotes mutual respect—staff to patient, patient to staff, and staff to staff.
- ◆ It promotes independence in the patient, rather than dependence. Having an independent patient is a benefit to the staff.
- ◆ We know where we stand and where the boundaries are if we are professional.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Great list! What about the patient? How does the patient benefit from our professionalism?*



Listen for, and post, any of the following answers:

- ◆ It makes our patients feel safe.
- ◆ It makes our patients have confidence in us.
- ◆ It helps with patient satisfaction.
- ◆ It makes the patient feel respected.
- ◆ It supports the delivery of good care to the patient.
- ◆ It supports the patient's independence rather than dependence.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Okay. Good job. It sounds like we're all pretty clear about what professionalism is, what boundaries are and how both can benefit patients and staff.*

## Case Scenarios

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15 minutes

**Trainer** states out loud:

*So let's take a look at some real-life scenarios of moments when professionalism got put on the back burner. For this next activity, I'm passing out a scenario card. Please pick a partner to work with. Let's pair up. The scenario on your card really happened. Read over the scenario carefully and work with your partner to answer the following questions:*

- ↪ What went wrong?*
- ↪ What rule of professionalism or code of conduct was broken?*
- ↪ What boundaries (if any) were stepped on?*
- ↪ What should have happened?*
- ↪ If you were the technician in this scenario, how would you have behaved?*

*Use your paper and pen to jot down your answers. You will **have five minutes** to do this. Then I'll ask you to share your scenario and answers with the whole group, so be prepared to report back.*



After 5 minutes call time.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*Wow, I heard a lot of great discussions going on! Let's take **another five minutes** and have one or two of you go over your scenario. Tell us what went wrong and how you would have acted differently.*



If there is time, take another 5 minutes and ask one or two other technicians to share their scenarios, and then continue with the wrap-up.

## **Resources/Wrap-up/Questions**

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(5 minutes)

**Trainer** states out loud:

*You all did a great job on your scenarios! I think in most cases it was pretty obvious what went wrong. But sometimes situations may not be so obvious, so before we finish up I'd like to ask you if you have any questions or comments about this in-service on professionalism, and setting and keeping boundaries?*



Answer any questions or acknowledge comments.

**Trainer** states out loud:

*I want to thank you all for coming to the training today. You all did a great job.*

*I'm also passing out some more information on professionalism that you can take with you.*



Additional resources that you can copy before your in-service are found at the back of this module.

## **Optional: Post-test**

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(5 minutes)

Hand out 1 post-test sheet per participant. Allow participants to work for a few minutes. Collect all sheets.

## Want More Information?

Here are some resources to help you adapt this training module to your facility's circumstances or to share with your staff.

### Articles

- ◆ Crampton, Karen. "Professional Boundaries in the Dialysis Setting." *Dialysis and Transplantation*, September 2001, pages 592-596. Available at [www.ikidney.com/iKidney/Community/Pro2Pro/Technicians/ProfessionalBoundariesintheDialysisSetting.htm](http://www.ikidney.com/iKidney/Community/Pro2Pro/Technicians/ProfessionalBoundariesintheDialysisSetting.htm)
- ◆ Fisherty, Megan. "Crossing the Line: Pushing the Limits on Professional Boundaries." [www.nurseweek.com/features/98-10/involve.html](http://www.nurseweek.com/features/98-10/involve.html).
- ◆ National Council of State Boards of Nursing, *Professional Boundaries: A Nurse's Guide to the Importance of Appropriate Professional Boundaries*, Chicago, 1996. Available at [www.ncsbn.org/pdfs/expectnurse.pdf](http://www.ncsbn.org/pdfs/expectnurse.pdf)
- ◆ Harteley, Sue. "Drawing the Lines of Professional Boundaries." *Renalink* Summer 2002, pages 7-9.
- ◆ Leurquin-Hallet, Lisa. "Professional Boundaries in Nephrology Nursing Practice." *ANNA Journal*, February 1999, pages 80-82.

### Web sites

- ◆ Foster Seminars and Communication [www.fosterseminars.com](http://www.fosterseminars.com)
- ◆ National Kidney Foundation [www.kidney.org](http://www.kidney.org)

# Case Scenarios

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## Case Scenario #1

### **I'm Going Through a Terrible Divorce!**

A patient recently called the Renal Network to file a grievance. Among many things, he stated that he refused to have a certain technician cannulate him because the technician has been talking, non-stop, about a terrible divorce and custody battle that she is going through. He describes her in a constant state of impatience and anger. He refuses to let her work with him because he is afraid that she won't concentrate on his arm. He's afraid that she will ultimately cause him pain because she is not focused on her job or her patients.

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## Case Scenario #2

### **I'm the Only Caregiver for You, Babe**

A facility recently called the Renal Network concerned about the behavioral problem of a particular patient. The patient refuses to allow any technician, except for his absolute favorite, to cannulate him. It was discovered that the technician had told the patient, "I'm the best technician here and the only one you need. I'll take the best care of you and make sure nothing bad happens to you while you are on the unit." Now this technician has moved to another dialysis unit across town. The patient is furious and scared. He's demanding to know, "Where has my girlfriend gone?"

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## Case Scenario #3

### **It's Not a Bribe, It's a Gift**

A grievance was filed by a patient who stated she had been giving her technician a \$20 bill at every treatment. She demanded that the technician give her the best care possible for the extra money — as much as \$60 a week. The technician, who needed the money, wasn't sure what to do, so she worked like crazy to give this patient the best care possible. Soon the technician became overwhelmed with the amount of work it took just to keep the patient happy. She often felt like the patient's private-duty technician, and she knew that she wasn't giving her best to the other patients. She felt so guilty and scared that she quit. Now the patient is angry that her favorite technician has left the unit.

**Case Scenario #4**

**There, There Sweet Baby**

A retired colonel calls up the Renal Network very disgruntled. He stated that a new technician was being very disrespectful. When asked what the technician had done to be disrespectful, he stated, "She calls me hon, honey, sweetie pie and cutie. She even called me a baby because I complained about how bad I was feeling. I'm a Colonel in the United States Army! I served in two wars! She should be calling me Colonel Jones, Mr. Jones or Sir!"

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**Case Scenario #5**

**Stop Telling Me What to Do!**

A dialysis facility dietitian has been trying to explain to a patient the importance of monitoring potassium. The patient begins yelling at the dietitian, "I've given up everything I love! Tomatoes, strawberries and bananas. I don't have any potassium in me. I'm sick and tired of being harassed by you. You're one to talk! Look at you, Miss Fatty Pants! Who are you to tell me how to diet?" The dietitian then yells at the patient, "If you don't shut up right now, you'll never be able to come back here!"

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**Case Scenario #6**

**I Could Run This Place Better!**

A dialysis patient calls the Renal Network to state that he has many complaints. First, he reports that the unit does not use proper sterilization and that he's seen technicians move from one patient to another without washing their hands or gloving up. He also states that he's very disappointed in upper management because the technicians aren't paid enough. When he hears that the technicians will not be receiving a raise this year, he is furious. He tells the network that he's going to find a new unit where the staff is treated better.

# Pre/Post-Test

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's session: **Professionalism in Dialysis Care**

## Goal:

Define professionalism in the dialysis center and allow staff to identify ways to apply skills to increase patient satisfaction and define boundaries.

## Objectives:

- Demonstrate, through group discussion, an understanding of professionalism within the following relationships—staff member to patient, staff member to family, and staff member to staff member.
- Demonstrate, through group discussion, an appreciation for how a high degree of professionalism can improve patient compliance, increase patient involvement in disease management, and reduce patient and provider complaints, including lawsuits.
- Demonstrate, through role-playing, how to respectfully set limits (boundaries) with patients.
- Demonstrate, through group discussion, an understanding of the rationale behind these concepts, and how they operate to achieve the highest quality patient care.

**Directions:** Please circle your responses. There is one correct answer for each question.

## Questions:

1. As a staff member at a dialysis facility, I exhibit professionalism in my relationships with patients by:
  - a. Introducing myself to new patients and telling them what my position is on the dialysis unit
  - b. Using nicknames to address my patients
  - c. Making sure I have all of the equipment I need ready to go when the patient arrives
  - d. a and c
  - e. None of the above

2. As a staff member at a dialysis facility, I exhibit professionalism in my relationships with other staff members by:
  - a. Discussing other staff members' personal lives with them while on the floor
  - b. Coming to work on time
  - c. Using Mr., Mrs., Ms. or Miss with other staff members, especially when I am talking to them in front of patients
  - d. Talking about other staff members with my patients
  - e. a, b and c
  - f. b and c
  
3. Setting and keeping clear boundaries are an important part of professionalism because:
  - a. Boundaries keep the relationship between the caregiver and patient appropriate
  - b. Boundaries keep the relationship between the caregiver and patient safe
  - c. Boundaries protect caregivers and patients from misunderstandings
  - d. All of the above
  - e. None of the above
  
4. Examples of keeping clear boundaries include:
  - a. Going on a date with a patient just to help him/her feel better
  - b. Asking my patient for advice about getting a divorce because he/she went through a divorce and it worked out well
  - c. Accepting tips, money or gifts from my patients for the good services that I provide
  - d. Saying "no" when a patient asks me if they can borrow some money
  - e. None of the above
  
5. Professionalism benefits staff or patients by:
  - a. Promoting mutual respect—staff to patient, patient to staff, and staff to staff
  - b. Helping with patient satisfaction and independence
  - c. Making my patients and other staff members have confidence in me as a dialysis technician
  - d. Supporting the delivery of good care to patients
  - e. All of the above
  - f. a, b and d