

Promises and hurdles of undergraduate medical development in Greece

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**Aim:** In this paper we sought to explore undergraduate medical students' views about their professional development during their studies that are considered to be related to medical professionalism.

**Method:** A descriptive cross-sectional study using interpretative analysis of anonymous 10-item questionnaires was conducted at the University of Patras Medical School (UPMS), Greece. The study sample consisted of 134 undergraduate students in their fifth and sixth year of study at UPMS.

**Results:** Undergraduate students emphasized the great significance of daily clinically-oriented practice in the wards in the group of behaviors consistent with medical professionalism. The integrated curriculum and informal discussions with members of the academic staff in the form of role models were also regarded as valuable approaches strongly enhancing professionalism. Students' personal statements contained attributes regarding premium professional skills, including constancy and perfectionism throughout a lifelong learning process, so as to be able to provide high quality medical care to patients.

**Conclusion:** According to our undergraduate medical students themselves, the last 2 years of their studies are important to understand the essence of professionalism and develop their professional medical attitudes. Clinically-oriented teaching activities together with the informal curriculum of enhanced role modeling promote medical professional behaviors and increase standards of health care provided to patients.

**Keywords:** undergraduate students, medicine, professionalism, medical education, Greece