

Faculty discussion guide for Overview: History of Surgery

Key points to bring out

1. Surgery is as old as human records and as new as tomorrow's *Annals*
2. Organization and education of surgeons has varied greatly
3. Social prominence of surgeons has varied greatly

Professionalism is a commitment of ideals of profession; you may not pick and choose the parts you want, whether standards of practice, qualifications or ethics, you have to take the whole package.

Profession is self-regulating community with special knowledge and expertise granted public recognition through special privileges by the society because the privileges are 1) necessary to gain the useful benefits provided by the special knowledge and expertise and 2) commensurate with the benefits. When either factor is perceived to change the profession is in trouble.

Public support is based on ability to care for patients; level of support varies with uniqueness of cure offered.

If this is true, should the profession make efforts to educate and inform the public on crucial scientific and social issues, if it should, then how are the members of the profession to best aid that campaign?