

21st Century Medical Professionalism: Renewing the Social Contract

Christine K. Cassel, MD, MACP

Advancing 21st Century Medical Professionalism:

A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Roundtable Discussion

January 13, 2009



FOUNDATION

510 Walnut Street | Suite 1700

Philadelphia, PA 19106-3699

215.446.3530 | [1.800.441.ABIM](tel:1800441ABIM)

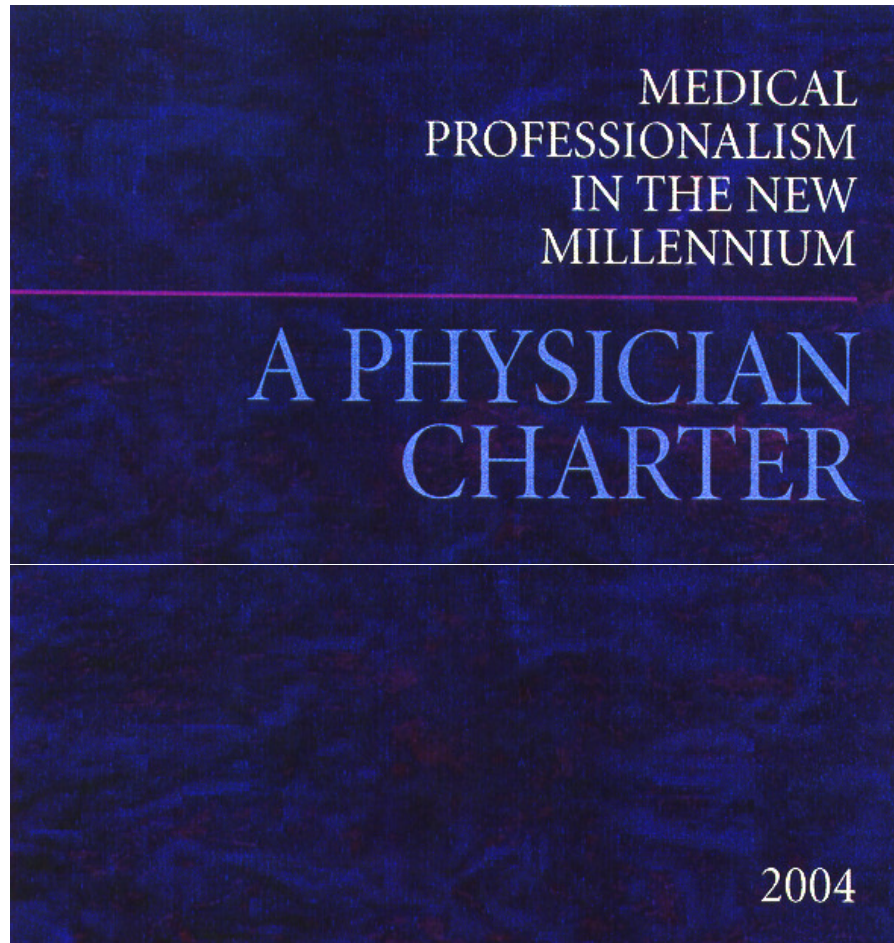
www.foundationabim.org

Professionalism Redux

- Redefining professionalism
 - What we mean by professionalism today
- Renewed sense of purpose
 - Why we need professionalism in health care
- Restoring professionalism
 - How physicians and stakeholders can partner to nourish professionalism



See Hafferty, F. and D. Levinson, “Moving Beyond Nostalgia and Motives: Towards a Complexity Science View of Medical Professionalism”
Perspectives in Biology and Medicine, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 599-615, Autumn 2008.



Patient welfare first
Patient autonomy
Social justice

Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium: A Physician Charter. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Feb. 5, 2002, Vol. 136, Issue 3, pp. 243-246



Physician Charter Commitments

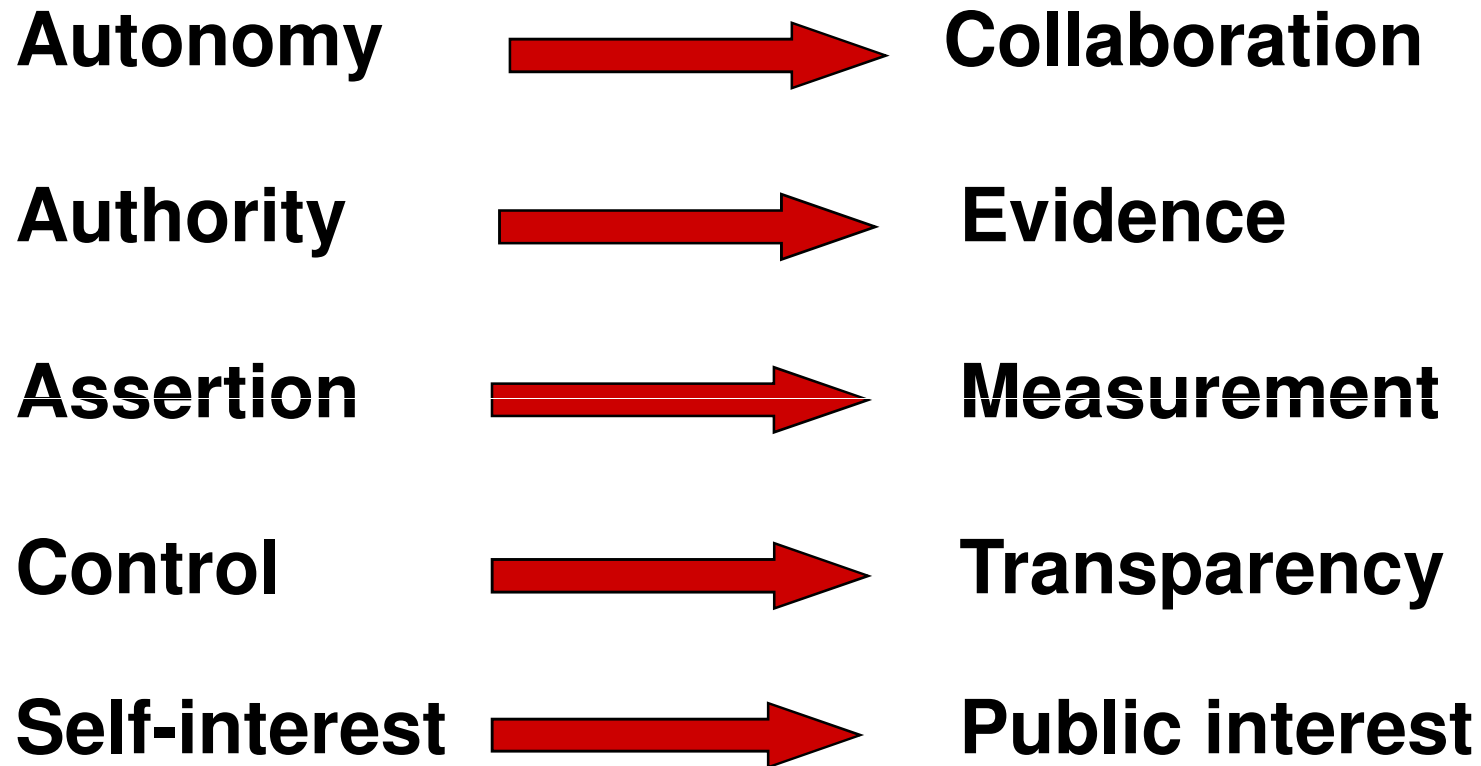
- Professional Competence
- Honesty with Patients
- Patient Confidentiality
- Maintaining Appropriate Relations with Patients
- Improving Quality of Care
- Improving Access to Care
- Just Distribution of Finite Resources
- Scientific Knowledge
- Maintaining Trust by Managing Conflicts of Interest



FOUNDATION

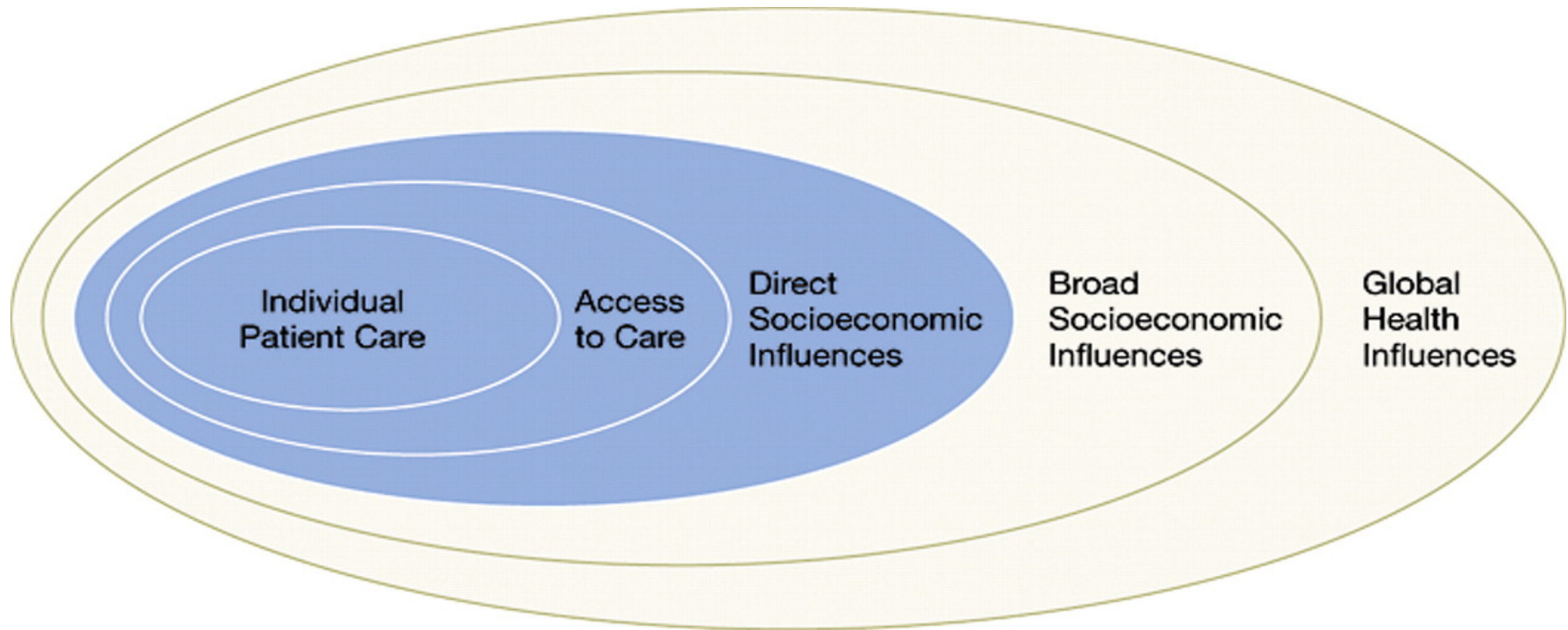
Professional Responsibilities

Redefining Professionalism



Professionalism = Accountability

An Expanded View of Physician Obligations to Patients and Society



Domains of Professional Obligation



Domains of Professional Aspiration

But Mismatch with Reality

- Significant gaps between beliefs and behaviors
 - *Campbell et al, 2007*
- Only 55% people receive recommended care
 - *McGlynn et al, 2003*
- Loss of public faith in the authority of the medical profession
 - *Schlesinger, 2002*
- Push to teach, assess and report on professionalism—and pushback from students and physicians
 - *“Do as I say, not as I do”*

Professionalism in Crisis

- Emerging focus on professionalism in context of organizational and environmental conditions
- Broken social contract – need a renewed alliance with society to eliminate impediments to professionalism

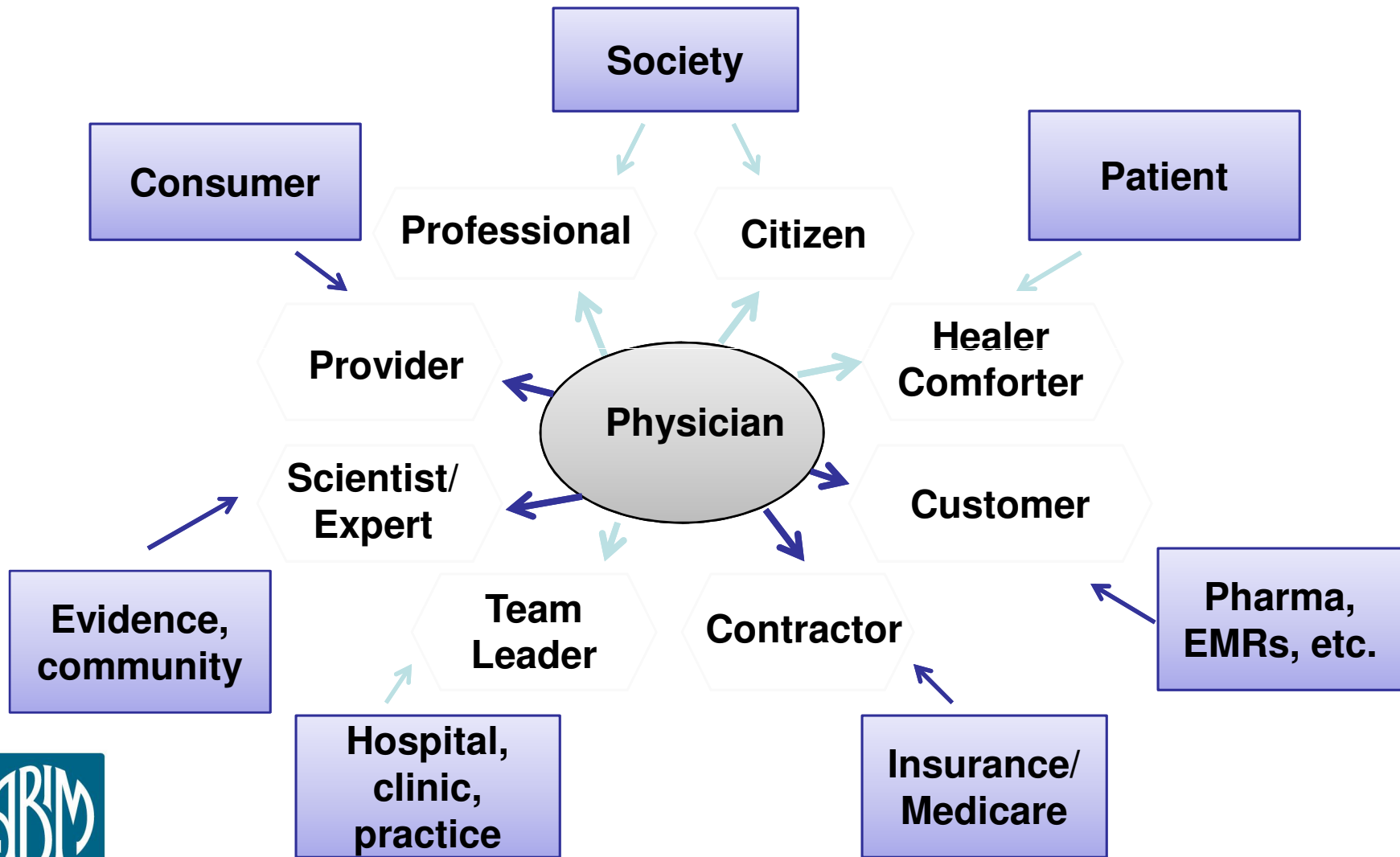
--Cohen et al, JAMA 2007

Professionalism Matters

- Resonates deeply with many physicians—source of inspiration for daily practice and for improving the health care system
- Patient vulnerability and information asymmetry can be minimized, but are persistent problems in health care
 - *Even physicians need a trusted doctor*
- **Trust has economic and social value** —*and professionalism builds trust with individual patients and society*

Physician's Role: 2009

Complicated or Complex?



Role of the Professional

- Trusted agent with knowledge and experience to inform decision-making
- Is *moral virtue* and commitment to *living professional ideals* a fair and reasonable expectation?
 - How do we measure, select for, monitor and recognize/reward these attributes?

Aligning Forces to Improve Health Care



Bridging the Divide

- Toward a shared, integrated vision of professionalism and accountability
 - Can we encourage physicians to embrace a new definition of professionalism consistent with the Physician Charter?
 - Can we encourage other stakeholders to nourish professionalism as a strategy to improve the health care system?