

# COMMUNICATION

## Professional behaviour and maintaining fitness to practice

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Professionalism is an important component of patient safety . This embraces attitudes and behaviours that serve the patient's best interests above and beyond other considerations. Organisations responsible for maintaining ethical standards include professionalism as one of the standards by which healthcare workers are judged (see Chapter 14 ). Fitness to work or practice – competence – refers not just to knowledge and skills but also to the attitudes required to be able to carry out one's duties. Monitoring their own fitness for work is the responsibility of each individual, their employer and professional organisations. Healthcare workers are required to have transparent systems in place to identify , monitor and assist them to maintain their competence. Credentialing is one way to ensure that clinicians are adequately prepared to safely treat patients with particular problems or to undertake defined procedures.

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