Learning Objectives

Recognise situations which would require medical students to speak up

Identify barriers to speaking up about concerns

Explore the benefits of highlighting concerns about professionalism, patient safety and the wellbeing of others

Practice difficult conversations in scenarios where speaking up is necessary
How well do you know the GMC “Achieving Good Medical Practice” guidelines?
Key Domains

1. Knowledge, Skills and Performance
2. Safety and Quality
3. Communication, Partnership and Teamwork
4. Maintaining Trust
Why is this Important?

- Speaking up about things which could affect others’ wellbeing can lead to changes which prevent harm, provide support and help others.
- As future doctors, we will soon be trusted by the public to speak up about things which affect their welfare.
- Knowing when and how to speak up is often difficult, so practising this as students can make it easier in the future.
How It Works

You are a 1st year medical student
Navigate your way through the Game of Medical School Life taking on whatever medical school throws your way
Try to base your decisions on the GMC Achieving Good Medical Practice Guidelines
Rules

Up to 4 individuals or teams can play

Progress through medical school by rolling the dice and moving your counter that number of squares

When you land on a space, click on the number to view the instructions for that square

As you progress, you will gain and lose “professionalism points” depending on the square and how you interpret ethical situations

Keep track of the points for each player as the aim is to gain the most points by the time you graduate
Potential Tasks

Speaking Out
Decide whether you would take action in each situation and how you would go about raising your concerns, 1 point for an appropriate action

Welfare
Discuss the welfare situation presented, points are scored for appropriate consideration of all options

Communication Station
Practice discussing challenging topics with your peers who will be playing the role of your colleagues, points are scored for appropriate communication skills
Potential Tasks

Role Play Station
You will be given a role play scenario, a facilitator watching the scenario will judge to see if you acted in a professional and appropriate manner and award you a point

Myth Busters
Quick fire question based on the GMC guidelines, 1 point for a correct answer

Professionalism Scenario
Choose the most appropriate action in each situation, 1 point for each correct answer
BUT BEWARE...

If at any point you choose an action that is deemed by the facilitator as being inappropriate or dangerous then you will miss a turn
Top Tips

● There is often not one “correct” answer, sometimes many different approaches can be appropriate

● You are not expected to be perfect, we learn through making mistakes
1 - Role play

You are at a freshers event and you see 3 fellow medical students in the queue for a nightclub wearing lanyards saying “medical student”. They are visibly drinking alcohol although are not displaying drunk behaviour.

With a partner to play the role of the other medical student, role play what you might say to the students in this situation.
You have just moved in to your new halls of residence. Your neighbour appears very quiet and withdrawn and avoids contact with other students. You think you can hear crying from inside their room.

Discuss a way in which you could approach this situation, giving a reasons for and against taking this approach.
3 - Speaking Up

Explain 1 potential barrier to speaking up about unprofessional behaviour of NHS staff.
4A- Myth Buster

An elderly patient has been regularly making hurtful and racist comments towards you when you see her on the ward. It is starting to reduce your motivation to attend placement. What do you do?

Choose 2 options:

1. Avoid the dementia ward where the patient is
2. Report the patient’s behaviour to security as verbal abuse of NHS staff should not be tolerated
3. Tell your placement supervisor about the situation
4. Call in sick until the patient has been discharged
5. Nothing. Accepting diverse beliefs is part of a doctor’s role
6. Seek support from services signposted by your university
You have just been diagnosed with depression. What do you do?

1. Don’t tell anyone, I will get kicked out by my medical school if they find out
2. Seek help from your GP but don’t inform the medical school
3. Speak to the welfare team at the medical school to see how they can best help support you in your studies
4. Inform your supervisors and placement coordinators at the medical school
5A - Communication

Whilst shadowing 2 FY2 doctors in A&E, it is apparent that one is very stressed and rushing around while the other is spending most of his time on his personal mobile phone or joking with nursing staff.

With one of your colleagues acting as the unprofessional doctor, practice telling him that he is not behaving appropriately and should support his colleague.
5B - Communication

Whilst shadowing a consultant on the ward round, you notice that he refers to the patients in derogatory ways such as “shall we see the crazy old lady” or “that annoying epileptic”

With one of your colleagues acting as the consultant, practice telling him that this is not a professional way to refer to patients
You are asked to submit an essay on diagnosis and management of COPD. Your peer tells you that he has previously done a research project on COPD so is submitting his introduction.

Choose 1 member of the team to explain in 1 minute whether they think this counts as unprofessional behaviour or not.
6B - Professionalism

You requested to attend a 4 month residential placement with your girlfriend but you have just had a messy break up. What is the most appropriate action?

1. Talk to your ex to discuss how you can maintain a professional relationship
2. Attend the placement but avoid your ex where possible
3. Inform your medical school and ask to change placements
4. Swap placements with a friend
7A - Role Play

You and your colleague are talking to a patient who has cataracts. She asks you about the corrective surgery for cataracts. Your colleague explains the procedure but says that it will be under general anaesthetic. You are certain that it is done under local anaesthetic.

Choose the most appropriate option:

1. Interrupt immediately and correct him
2. Take him aside, correct him and encourage him to inform the patient
3. Say nothing as it was not your mistake
4. Report him to your supervisor for giving incorrect information to patients and not being clear about the extent of his knowledge
7B - Role Play

You are a medical student based in A&E. You have just been approached by one of the nurses who asks you to take a blood gas from a patient who has become more unwell over the past few minutes. The nurse says she can’t find any other doctor so would you mind taking the sample as it needs to be done urgently.

You understand how a blood gas is taken but have never performed the task on a patient or in simulation

One person play the role of the medical student and another the nurse.

Act out what you would do in this situation.
8 - Communication

You are on an elderly care ward and are approached by a patient’s family who are wanting to know if their relative will survive this latest episode of pneumonia. They are keen for answers and refuse to leave the ward until their questions have been answered.

How would you approach this situation?

What would you say to the relatives?

Think about how and where you would speak to the relatives
You are a medical student and one of your colleagues confides in you that they are really struggling at the moment. Their mum has just been diagnosed with breast cancer and they are planning on going home for the rest of the week.

They ask you to cover for them whilst they are away but not to tell anyone as they are still coming to terms with the diagnosis themselves and don’t want other people to know.

Discuss with the facilitator what you would do in this situation.

What ethical issues does it bring up?

How might you be feeling in this situation?

Is there anything else you could offer to your friend?
10 - Myth Buster

Students are employed by their placement providers and therefore not raising concerns can be punishable by law

1. True
2. False
If I do anything wrong at medical school I will be referred to a fitness to practice panel

1. True
2. False
12 - Role Play

Imagine you are a junior doctor. You have been asked by the consultant to speak to the parents of a 4 year old boy. The boy came in to A&E 3 days having fallen off his scooter and hurt his arm. At the time the X-ray was reported as being clear, with no fracture seen. The child was discharged home.

They have returned 3 days later as he is still in significant pain and a subsequent X-ray showed a fractured radius.

On further examination the fracture is visible on the initial X-ray and was missed by the medical team.

One person play the role of the doctor and the remaining people play the role of the child’s parents. How would you deal with this situation?
13 - Professionalism

You have been feeling under the weather for several weeks. You have no energy and find yourself frequently feeling faint and dizzy whilst on the ward. You still continue to attend all your timetabled activities despite feeling very unwell and are not keen to visit the GP as you are very busy and struggling to find time to fit in an appointment.

Are you acting in a professional manner?

What advice would you give to someone else in a similar situation (as if looking in from the outside)?

What should you do?
14 - Communication

You are shadowing the registrar in the gastroenterology outpatient clinic. The clinic is running over an hour late due to the consultant calling in sick. The next patient comes into the consultation room extremely angry and is shouting at both the registrar and the nurse about his long wait.

Think about how you would approach speaking to the patient.

What techniques might you use to try to calm the situation?

Is there anything you may be able to say or do to help?
15 - Myth Buster

1. In a 2015 BMJ survey, what % of UK medical student respondents said they had experienced or received treatment for a mental health condition?

As a student you will be exposed to situations which may make you feel upset or emotional. It is important to be able to deal with these feelings and there are many ways in which you can receive support.

In 30 seconds, list as many ways you can in which you could receive support if you were struggling with your feelings.
You are based on the surgical admission ward. Several of the patients are being prepared for theatre. You witness the nurse inserting a catheter however, she does not use a pair of sterile gloves and does not adequately clean her equipment before performing the procedure.

You then witness the same nurse carry out another catheter in the same manner on another patient later in the day.

What would you do in this situation?
18 - Professionalism

The junior doctor you are shadowing answers the ward telephone to a relative of one of the ward patients who has just been admitted and she is yet to meet. She tells them that the patient has an infection and that they can come and visit her.

Explain what would you do in this situation.
19 - Welfare

Your friend discloses that they have caught HIV but with treatment it is being controlled with a barely detectable viral load. He says he hasn’t told the medical school because he thinks he may have to stop the course.

Is this true?
20 - Myth Buster

As a medical student I can engage in a relationship with a patient or their family as I am not yet their registered doctor

1. True
2. False
21A - Welfare

You are a 3rd year medical student and have recently been diagnosed by your GP with panic disorder.

Should you inform the university?

Can you list some advantages of telling the university about this?

What might stop you?
21B - Welfare

It is coming up to your medical school finals. You are starting to feel very stressed and anxious and it is beginning to affect your ability to perform tasks whilst on placement. You are considering dropping out of the course.

What can you do in this situation?

Who can you look to for support?
22A - Speaking Out

You are a medical student and the supervising consultant on your ward regularly speaks to you in a demeaning and unfair manner. He often asks you unfair questions and tries to embarrass you in front of your peers.

He is designated to sign your final appraisal at the end of the attachment, however you feel that he treats you unfairly and may not pass you.

What should you do in this situation?

Who else could you speak to if you did not feel comfortable talking to the consultant directly?
Explain 1 potential barrier to speaking up about unprofessional behaviour of NHS staff.
List 3 examples of unprofessional behaviour that may be demonstrated by a medical student.

Try to think as broadly as possible

How would this represent your ambitions to become a doctor?
23B - Professionalism

You are a 4th year medical student. Whilst on holiday last summer you received a caution from the police for antisocial behaviour outside a nightclub in Tenerife. The case was investigated and no further charges were brought.

What should you do in this situation?
24 - Role Play

You are a final year medical student. Your supervising doctor asks you to insert a cannula into an elderly patient.

When you approach the patient and explain the procedure, she is very confused and thinks you are taking her to the toilet.

With one member of your team playing the doctor and another to play the student, practice explaining what you would say to the consultant in this situation.
25 - Myth Buster

As a medical student I cannot have a conscientious objection to performing certain procedures

1. True
2. False
26 - Communication

Whilst travelling home on the bus, you overhear a group of fellow medical students discussing stories from their day on the psychiatric ward. They are describing an unusual delusion experienced by the patient but do not give any names or ages of the patient.

Explain whether you think the students are breaching confidentiality and what you would do in this situation.
27 - Welfare

You are a medical student on a cardiology ward. On several occasions you have noticed the junior doctor on the ward crying in the staffroom. When you ask her about this, she seems reluctant to talk about it but confides in you that she is struggling with the workload and pressure of the job.

What would you do in this situation?
You are on the ward round and see a patient who has been admitted with an infective exacerbation of their COPD. They smoke 60 cigarettes per day and have recently been diagnosed with lung cancer.

Your mother is currently undergoing treatment for ovarian cancer. How may you feel towards the patient in this situation?

How may this affect how you treat the patient?
29 - Role Play

Your friend says they never wear their medical student lanyard whilst on placement because “people think I’m a doctor so I get to do more”. With a peer acting as this medical student, practice explaining to them why this is unprofessional.
30 - Speaking Out

You are concerned about the behaviour of one of your colleagues. They regularly fail to turn up to teaching sessions hungover from the night before, and on several occasions you have seen them on the ward in a similar condition. You have not said anything to them or anyone else.

Is it your role to raise concerns about other students?

How might you go about speaking out?

Can you think of any other situations in which you might need to speak out about the behaviour of a friend/colleague?
31 - Communication

You wish to raise a concern but, based on a previous experience where you feel you weren’t taken seriously, you doubt the designated person would solve the issue.

Explain what you would do in this situation
32 - Professionalism

What is unconscious bias?

How can it be avoided?
33 - Professionalism

You are concerned that one of your lecturers may be under the influence of alcohol during some of her teaching sessions. Which would be the most appropriate action?

1. Approach him after the lecture to find out more and ask if they need support
2. Say nothing as he is not a threat to patient safety as an academic
3. Tell the designated person for raising concerns at your medical school
34 – Myth Buster

If you need to raise concerns about a friend’s sensitive issue, it is better to remain anonymous so that they do not lose trust in you for telling the medical school when they did not want you to

1. True
2. False
35 - Myth Buster

If I am summoned to a Fitness to a Practice panel, I am on my own, the medical school will no longer support me as they have to be impartial.

1. True
2. False

What is a Fitness to Practice panel?

How does it work?
36 - Speaking Out

You are a medical student on an acute admissions ward. When looking through a set of patient notes you notice that some blood results have been incorrectly copied into the clerking booklet. The results belong to a patient with a similar name.

The results showed that the potassium levels were very low so they were started on a potassium supplement. This was a mistake as the patient had a normal potassium level. You are the first person to notice this.

What should you do?

How may you go about raising concerns?
37 - Professionalism

In which of the following situations would you be expected to speak up to the appropriate person at your medical school?

1. Your peer arrives half an hour late to a seminar
2. Your peer regularly attends weekly PBL sessions without having completed assigned tasks
3. A video of a peer dancing embarrassingly and obviously drunk is sent to your medical student group chat
38- Learning point

You are almost ready to graduate!

Give a learning point that you have learnt so far about speaking up.

Do you think you would feel more confident about speaking up about concerns in the future?
How did you do?
Add up your points to see who is the winner.
Learning Points

- Like this game, life is unpredictable. We will all encounter difficult situations which require us to speak up about our own or others’ welfare, unprofessional practice or patient safety concerns.
- If you are unsure about a situation, discussing it with someone experienced in dealing with concerns will help you to understand the best course of action.
- Raising concerns can make a huge improvement to patient care, prevent harm occurring and provide support to those in need.
Don’t worry!

You are not expected to be the finished article as a medical student, that is what medical school is for!