Pledge of Professionalism and Oath Of a Pharmacist

PLEDGE OF PROFESSIONALISM

As a student of pharmacy, I believe there is a need to build and reinforce a professional identity founded on integrity, ethical behavior, and honor. This development, a vital process in my education, will help ensure that I am true to the professional relationship I establish between myself and society as I become a member of the pharmacy community. Integrity must be an essential part of my everyday life and I must practice pharmacy with honesty and commitment to service.

To accomplish this goal of professional development, I as a student of pharmacy should:

A. DEVELOP a sense of loyalty and duty to the profession of pharmacy by being a builder of community, one able and willing to contribute to the well-being of others and one who enthusiastically accepts the responsibility and accountability for membership in the profession.

B. FOSTER professional competency through life-long learning. I must strive for high ideals, teamwork and unity within the profession in order to provide optimal patient care.

C. SUPPORT my colleagues by actively encouraging personal commitment to the Oath of Maimonides and a Code of Ethics as set forth by the profession.

D. INCORPORATE into my life and practice, dedication to excellence. This will require an ongoing reassessment of personal and professional values.

E. MAINTAIN the highest ideals and professional attributes to ensure and facilitate the convenantal relationship required of the pharmaceutical care giver.

The profession of pharmacy is one that demands adherence to a set of rigid ethical standards. These high ideals are necessary to ensure the quality of care extended to the patients I serve. As a student of pharmacy, I believe this does not start with graduation; rather, it begins with my membership in this professional college community. Therefore, I must strive to uphold these standards as I advance toward full membership in the profession of pharmacy.

Oath of a Pharmacist

At this time, I vow to devote my professional life to the service of all humankind through the profession of pharmacy.

I will consider the welfare of humanity and relief of human suffering my primary concerns.

I will apply my knowledge, experience and skills to the best of my ability in serving the public and other health professionals.

I will keep abreast of developments and maintain professional competency in my profession of pharmacy.
I will obey the laws governing the practice of pharmacy and will support enforcement of such laws.

I will maintain the highest principles of moral and ethical conduct.

I will address the challenges and opportunities in the profession of pharmacy and will participate in the change process.

I take these vows voluntarily with the full realization of the responsibility with which I am entrusted by the public.

**Commentary**

The Oath of a Pharmacist is based on the "Oath and Prayer of Maimonides" with input from the American Pharmaceutical Association (APhA) and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP). The Board of Directors of AACP approved the Oath of a Pharmacist in 1983 and has made it available to every college and school of pharmacy.

The characteristics of a professional pharmacy practitioner are described in the Oath such that we obtain an understanding of the meaning of the word "professional." Professionals devote their lives to a significant social value. Pharmacy is a learned profession requiring individuals to dedicate themselves voluntarily to acquiring and maintaining exceptional knowledge and skills in order to provide pharmaceutical care in an ethical context.

The first two statements of the Oath describe a commitment to the service of humankind, the welfare of humanity, and the relief of human suffering as the pharmacist's primary concerns. Further, these statements emphasize that this commitment is lifelong in nature and should be practiced without discrimination. Specifically, the concept of pharmaceutical care embraces a covenantal relationship with the patient and other health care providers to ensure that optimal therapeutic outcomes are attained. The next two statements accentuate the character of a pharmacist in exceeding the knowledge and skills of all others in providing pharmaceutical care and services to the public and other health professionals. A lifetime of learning in pharmacy is necessary to maintain one's professional stature and to provide the services inherent with membership in the profession. The acquisition of knowledge and skills by pharmacists must serve to advance the profession. Professional competency involves participation in organizations that support and speak for the profession. Pharmacists promote unity within the profession and enthusiastically accept the responsibilities and accountability for membership in the profession.

The next two statements characterize the pharmacist's commitment to live a life characterized by faithfulness to high moral principles and ethical conduct. This is manifested not only in abiding and enforcing the laws governing the practice of pharmacy but also in assuring that the laws support the primary mission of the profession, the delivery of pharmaceutical care. Pharmacists must exhibit moral and ethical conduct in their daily interactions with patients and other health care providers. Pharmacists dedicate themselves to excellence in their knowledge, skill, and caring because they adhere to high moral and ethical principles. This enables them to maintain a covenantal relationship with society.

The next statement describes pharmacy as a profession where change must be embraced, rather than resisted. Pharmacists must actively participate as agents of change, focusing on improving health care. The last statement of the Oath describes the pharmacist as voluntarily making these vows with full understanding of the responsibility they impose.

Professionalism requires constant attention. The seeds of professionalism are sown when students begin their preparation for pharmacy school, are cultivated and nurtured in pharmacy school, and are brought to fruition and maintained during their careers as pharmacists. Becoming a professional means more than learning the science of pharmacy. It means mastering the art of pharmaceutical care in service to fellow human beings. This service must be carried out with dignity, integrity, and honor as reflected in this Oath.
