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### **Fitness to Practice**

#### Abstract:

It is necessary, yet not sufficient, for doctors to remain competent on a clinical level. In 2014, the UK General Medical Council policy statement described the concept of fitness to practice (FTP) as a position of justified privilege: “doctors have a respected position in society and their work gives them privileged access to patients, some of who may be very vulnerable. Doctors whose conduct has shown that they cannot justify the trust placed in them should not continue in unrestricted practice.”

The concept of FTP applies not only to registered doctors, but also to medical students, who also have a privileged position towards patients. The provision of a sound medical ethics education combined with proper training in professionalism promotes the future good practice of medicine, self-regulates medical students and doctors, and ultimately prevents harm or risk to patients and the public.

It therefore becomes a very important educational practice of medical schools to identify students who have reached the threshold for referral to FTP procedures. Medical students are the doctors of tomorrow, and the similarities between the behavior of students, and the behavior expected of practicing doctors have been well-documented. In this sense it is imperative for medical schools to provide educational environments in which students are aware of, and familiar with, the standards of professional and personal behavior expected of them from the very beginning of their schooling. Systems to detect impairment of FTP should be in place, with required interventions for remedial or even regulatory measures. Ultimately, fostering “good” doctors is not the same as trying to prevent “bad” ones. The authors propose to discuss the concept of FTP, with a recent case of student misbehavior in Korea.