

be prepared – life after graduation

Rachel Owusu-Ankomah explores integrity



Rachel Owusu-Ankomah is a CMF Associate Staffworker in London and a surgical trainee

The wonderful thing about our training as doctors, nurses or midwives is that it's vocational. As students, we glamorously envisage post-qualification life - 'I want to be a junior doctor who respects all my colleagues', 'I want to be a nurse who takes the time to be with their patients'. Perhaps the real challenge as students is that we should not just be thinking and waiting until graduation, but start being those things now.

Domain four of the General Medical Council's *Good Medical Practice* states that we should 'always be honest about [our] experience, qualifications and current role'. We should 'act with honesty and integrity [in] research'.¹ But does it go far enough?

God instructs us to speak, act and behave at work above reproach.² We are to respect our patients, peers and colleagues,³ to obey the rules.⁴ Our words should be clear - 'yes' should mean 'yes' and 'no' should mean 'no'.⁵ However, work culture can mean that we all too easily get swept up in the wrong thing - from talking about a colleague behind their back to doing personal printing at work.

I came unstuck when the work load built up. I normally worked hard and went out of my way to help others. Instead of admitting that I could not take on all the tasks, stubbornness and pride kicked in. I'd be given things to do, made assurances that I could get them done, but to my shame could not deliver. A far cry from the honesty and integrity I believe God calls us to.

So how can we work out our integrity? Consciously think about your own integrity in day-to-day life. What type of Christian medic or nurse do you want to be? Are you punctual to placement? Are you rude and dismissive to peers or colleagues? Do you take on projects and complete them in the given time? Do you have a 'not my patient, not my problem' attitude to the patient with dementia who needs guiding back to their bed?



Be honest with yourself and with God. Thank God for the areas of integrity you do exhibit and ask him to help you to keep on. When the stresses, strains and busyness of working life start, the cracks can start to appear. Practically address your integrity failings. 'I should get enough rest so I can leave on time for work', 'I will ask my small group to pray for me when struggling with projects'. Reflect, repent and act. The integrity with which we conduct our lives, especially in the workplace, is a personal testimony of God's holiness, grace, mercy and love.⁶

*'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord... It is the Lord Christ you are serving.'*⁷ ■

REFERENCES

1. General Medical Council. *Good Medical Practice*. GMC; 2013 bit.ly/2fVFuzD
2. 1 Peter 2:11-12
3. 1 Peter 2:17
4. Romans 13:1-5
5. Matthew 5:37
6. 1 Peter 1:16; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Micah 6:8; John 13:34-35
7. Colossians 3:23-24