

The Case for Physician Leadership

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Redefining Health Care

Creating Value-Based Competition on Results



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How Physicians Can Change the Future of Health Care

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THE HEALTH CARE POLICY DEBATE is stuck in a place that undermines physicians and the nation's health. Although reform proposals differ, they have this in common: each examines today's system and asks what incremental change, imposed from the outside, can effectively rein in costs that are both high and increasing. That approach will fail because it starts with a flawed premise. The purpose of the health care system is not to minimize costs but to deliver value to patients, that is, better health per dollar spent.

We offer a different approach. If one were to design a system focused on value and on rewarding innovation that advances medicine, what would that system look like? The next question

Today's preoccupation with cost shifting and cost reduction undermines physicians and patients. Instead, health care reform must focus on improving health and health care value for patients. We propose a strategy for reform that is market based but physician led. Physician leadership is essential. Improving the value of health care is something only medical teams can do. The right kind of competition—competition to improve results—will drive dramatic improvement. With such positive-sum competition, patients will receive better care, physicians will be rewarded for excellence, and costs will be contained. Physicians can lead this change and return the practice of medicine to its appropriate focus: enabling health and effective care. Three principles should guide this change: (1) the goal is value for patients, (2) medical practice should be organized around medical conditions and care cycles, and (3) results—risk-adjusted outcomes and costs—must be measured. Following these principles, professional satisfaction will increase and current pressures on physicians will decrease. If physicians fail to lead these changes, they will inevitably face ever-increasing administrative control of medicine. Improving health and health care value for patients is the only real solution. Value-based competition on results provides a path for reform that recognizes the role of health professionals at the heart of the system.

MD Leadership: What do we know?

- Traditional criteria for physician leadership advancement has focused on clinical accomplishments rather than leadership competencies (Stoller 2009, Morahan 1998, Reczynski 2010, Stoller 2008, Sangvai 2008)
- Most physicians receive no formal leadership training (Kochar 2003).
- Many physicians learn leadership skills through observation of established leaders and “in a hit or miss fashion” (Lane 1998, Fruge 2010).
- Physicians are often taught to act as competitive, independent thinkers, hindering their ability to communicate effectively with other clinicians and to work successfully in teams (Merry 1993, Stoller 2009, Reczynski 2010, Stoller et al 2008, Sangvai 2008, Fruge 2010, Kochar 2003).

MD Leadership: What do we know?

- Physicians have historically lacked the desire to lead, due in part to the cultural divide between physicians and administrators (Merry 1993).
- Physicians tend to experience difficulties in followership and working in teams (Stoller 2009, Reczynski 2010, Stoller 2008, Sangvai 2008).
- Physicians are in a unique position to influence the behavior of other clinicians and to influence physician satisfaction, an essential element for recruiting and retaining the best physicians (Xirasagar 2005, Menaker et al 2008)
- Medical centers are beginning to prioritize the investment in leadership academies for physicians (Rice 2009, Dillon 2009).

MD's are different than administrators

Physicians

- Work alone
- Healthcare is a profession
- Focus on patient
- Science training
- Optimize single outcome
- Lead by personality
- Autonomy driven
- Edge of envelope focus
- Quality is a property of the doctor-patient relationship

Administrators

- Work in teams
- Healthcare is a business
- Focus on organization
- Systems training
- Optimize big picture
- Lead by training
- Standards driven
- Compliance focus
- Quality is a property of the organization

Does it make a difference?

- Physician leaders positively influence patient outcomes, quality and error reduction; therefore, many hospitals and experts consider physician leadership training and development to be worth the investment of time and **resources** (Stoller 2009, Rice 2009, Morey 2002, Xirasagar 2005, Martin 2010, Hockey 2010, Strack Schijndel 2007, Sangvai 2008, Fruge 2010, Rice 2007, Rice 2009, Merry 1993, Xirasagar 2005, Stoller et al 2004).
- Physicians who practice effective teamwork and communication in particular will often achieve better **results** (Morey 2002, Martin 2010, Sanfilippo 2008, Boyle 2004, Greenburg 2007, Stoller et al 2004).
- Physician collaboration improves patient satisfaction, reduces length of stay, and leads to better integration of clinical care across service lines (Dillon 2009, Stoller et al 2004).
- An organization's commitment to physician development is positively associated with quality (Hockey 2010).

Strong complementary
partnerships make for the
highest quality care

What are the common skills we
need to be successful in a
partnership approach?

The NCHL model provides breakthrough research and a comprehensive database for defining the competencies required for outstanding healthcare leadership for the future.



Transformation

● Visioning, energizing, and stimulating a change process that coalesces communities, patients, and professionals around new models of healthcare and wellness

- Achievement Orientation
- Analytical Thinking
- Community Orientation
- Financial Skills
- Information Seeking
- Innovative Thinking
- Strategic Orientation

Execution

● Translating vision and strategy into optimal organizational performance.

- Accountability
- Change Leadership
- Collaboration
- Communication Skills
- Impact and Influence
- Initiative
- Information Technology Management
- Organizational Awareness
- Performance Measurement
- Process Management/Organizational Design
- Project Management

People

- Creating an organizational climate that values employees from all backgrounds and provides an energizing environment for them. The leader's responsibility to understand his or her impact on others and to improve his or her capabilities, as well as the capabilities of others
 - Human Resources Management
 - Interpersonal Understanding
 - Professionalism
 - Relationship Building
 - Self Confidence
 - Self Development
 - Talent Development
 - Team Leadership

Group Discussion

- What has been your experience in trying to manage and lead?
- What are the barriers that prevent your success in forming strong, high-performing physician-administrator partnerships?
- What would you like WSMA to do to assist your leadership development?