Developing Physician Leaders

The pathway to transformational change

Research by Lee Ann Jarousse
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Physician leadership development Q&As

1. What are the first steps in creating a physician leadership development program?

It's crucial for hospitals and health systems to develop a leadership development program that prepares the next generation of physicians who will become leaders. The hospital chief medical officer and CEO should work closely with the chief nursing officer and other senior leaders to prioritize the program. Our experience at Stanford Health Care in the Stanford Leadership Program for Attending Physicians (SLPAP) was just one example, where we identified 12 core competencies that physicians should develop. The program included a 6-month course with weekly sessions, followed by a yearlong mentoring experience and a project where the mentees led an initiative to improve clinical or administrative processes, with the help of a mentor who was a senior leader.

2. What are the types of leadership development programs that are currently available to physicians?

Physician leadership development programs vary in length, size, and focus. Some are focused on developing leadership skills for mid-career physicians, while others are designed for residents and fellows. The success of the program depends on the quality of the education, training, and mentorship provided. For example, the Stanford Leadership Program for Attending Physicians (SLPAP) was a 6-month program that included weekly sessions, a yearlong mentoring experience, and an initiative to improve an area of the hospital with guidance from a mentor who was a senior leader. The program was designed to help physicians develop the skills needed to lead and manage a team, improve patient care, and enhance patient satisfaction.

3. What is a program that provides training in strategic leadership for physicians?

Physician Leadership Development is a program that provides training in strategic leadership for physicians. It is a 6-month program that includes a series of workshops, courses, and sessions that focus on developing leadership skills for mid-career physicians. The program is designed to help physicians develop the skills needed to lead and manage a team, improve patient care, and enhance patient satisfaction. The program includes sessions on leadership development, communication, and decision-making, as well as opportunities to practice these skills in simulated situations.

4. What is the timeline for completing a program like Physician Leadership Development?

The timeline for completing a program like Physician Leadership Development can vary depending on the program's specific requirements. Typically, the program takes 6-12 months to complete, including the initial training, mentoring, and project work. The program is designed to be flexible and accommodate the busy schedules of physicians, with sessions that can be attended on a regular basis. The program includes both online and in-person components, with opportunities to practice leadership skills in simulated situations.

RESOURCES: Physician leadership development programs vary in size, scope, and location. Many programs are sponsored by medical schools, hospitals, or health systems, and may focus on leadership development for mid-career physicians or residents and fellows. For more information, contact the program director or visit their website.

TIPS: Physicians in leadership positions can benefit from joining a network with other leaders, such as the American Medical Association (AMA) or the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). These organizations offer resources and opportunities for leadership development, including workshops, webinars, and conferences.
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