

Develop & Leverage both Formal and Informal Physician Leadership to Optimize Performance in Physician Enterprises

Achieving optimal levels of all aspects of clinical and operational performance in your Physician Enterprise requires development of both *formal* and *informal* Physician Leaders to offer input in and provide direction to the clinical, strategic and operational aspects of the Provider Network. In order to integrate Physician Leaders into meaningful advisory and leadership roles, Executive Leadership must identify, cultivate and develop strong relationships with their formal as well as informal Physician Leaders identified from among the ranks of Providers employed in your practices. In addition, don't be afraid to build relationships and seek out input from key referral sources working outside your network as well. Strengthening these outside relationships will offer Leadership insightful information related to potential opportunities and threats within your service area that might otherwise go undetected.

Formal Physician Leaders

A formal Physician Leader is one who has a specific and well-defined Leadership role that represents all or part of that individual's job duties within the Physician Enterprise. For example, a Physician may hold the specific title of Medical Director or may be assigned other Leadership duties and responsibilities. Many times these roles are in addition to their clinical practice. These Leaders may be recruited from outside to fill a specific need or they may be identified and cultivated from within the current Physician roster. In either case, these formal Leaders are invaluable when tackling difficult Physician to Physician matters.

Informal Physician Leaders

Formal Leadership roles and titles are well defined and easy to relate to. But what constitutes an informal Physician Leader? Informal leaders carry no specific leadership titles, duties or responsibilities as a part of their employment with the Physician Enterprise. Perhaps they are a seasoned

professional who is well respected by their Physician colleagues. Often there are a number of key elder statesmen in the network who have much wisdom to offer to the organization.

In other cases, an informal leader may simply be a young and energetic professional that is looking for ways to contribute to the betterment of their own practice – hence offering potential insights into opportunities for improvement as a whole. Seek and leverage their counsel. Engaging these informal leaders will undoubtedly offer untold benefits to the Enterprise as well as contribute significantly to their individual Provider Satisfaction. Do not discount the talent represented by the new and younger providers in your network. They are the leaders of the future and should be fostered, engaged and retained.

When seeking input and advice from your Physicians on pending changes or initiatives that may affect the providers in your network, be inclusive (not exclusive). It will always be much easier to gain the support of your overall provider staff (even when faced with difficult decisions that may be perceived as a negative impact) if the Physicians truly feel engaged with a meaningful means of sharing their input.

Establishing Leadership / Advisory Forums

Formal operating committees or forums at the practice or specialty level as well as network-wide Advisory Committees are critical to optimizing the Organization's performance and ensuring Physician buy-in. Forums such as these should meet on a monthly basis with regular, formal agendas. Standing agenda items should include reviewing and discussing both enterprise and practice-level financial reports and other key performance data. Truly engaged Physician Leaders need to know that they are well informed with transparent and timely financial and other relevant business information. But don't stop there! Informal personal encounters by Executive Leaders with all Physicians should be happening as often as possible. And by the way, network Executive Leadership should always try to come TO the Physician to meet. Pulling a Physician away from his or her practice for a non-

productivity meeting with leadership is counter to the message of maximizing Provider Productivity.

EBMGroup offers direct operational and advisory experience to bring best practices to the identification, organization and development of both formal and informal Physician Leaders in your Physician Enterprise. Feel free to contact us today to discuss opportunities to improve Physician engagement through Physician Leadership.

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