**The Spectrum of Leadership in Healthcare Organizations**

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**Introduction**

According to Dennis Pointer ``Leadership is among the most valued management abilities. It is a process in which a leader intentionally affects the human systems to achieve a common goal (Olden 2019). Healthcare leaders are unique from other leaders in different fields around the world. These leaders are better at managing change due to the nature of the healthcare field. There is not just one leader at an HCO, leaders must fulfill their responsibilities at all levels of a HCO to run one smoothly. A healthcare leader must understand the importance of time management and to maintain high productivity. An HCO leader is required to do multiple tasks and prioritize tasks a lot. A healthcare executive must understand the value of time management and sustain high productivity. An HCO leader must perform many jobs and prioritize tasks extensively. An ideal healthcare leader may or may not be natural but can develop these five qualities to be a better leader. They must show humility, have a vision, be a mentor, show integrity and be collaborative (Mozafaripour, S, 2021). Public health leadership includes a commitment to the community mainly regarding the fact that the public health leaders differ from leaders in other sectors (Czabanowska, K. 2014). Leadership roles differ by the type of healthcare organization. Leadership styles are found to be correlated with the quality care and measures that an HCO requires to take. Some common leadership styles include transactional, transformational, autocratic and task-oriented. (Sfantou, D. 2017). We will discuss more about the leadership style of Hillsboro County Health department and other HCOs in Hillsboro in detail.

**Leaders of the Public health department at Hillsboro County**

The Hillsboro county health department currently has a 12 member board setting with Dr.Tim Taylor as the Chairperson of the county board of Health. The county board is responsible for providing policy guidance, monitoring the health status information of its department and focusing on environmental health issues. The department is also responsible for reporting health problems and hazards using epidemiology. They are also responsible for enforcing the laws and regulations to protect their community. As public health professionals, they must be trained in crisis communication and disease outbreak protocols. They are qualified experts who protect communities during outbreaks. Along with crisis communication, they must prepare for emergencies such as environmental disasters and collaborate with state and local stakeholders. Overall, county board leaders must be active listeners, willing to make difficult judgments, transparent, encourage their employees, and capable of making solid decisions (Tulane University 2022).

Public health officials and leaders are also responsible for their environmental health division. They are responsible for maintaining rabies control, radon control, safe water drinking, campgrounds, health facility inspections and emergency preparedness. In the world we live in today, public health leaders must have a holistic understanding of the environmental determinants and the interconnections between human health and environmental health. These leaders can play a significant role in encouraging and strengthening participation of their surrounding community to empower environmental; health and sustainability. The public health leaders at Hillsboro County health department must adapt to strategies surrounding environmental health and its research while being aware of the monetary costs and benefits associated with each initiative and strategy (Horwitz-Willis, N, 2024)

One of the most essential on-hire skills a public health leader must possess is the knowledge of public health policies and regulations. This is important because policies shape the services that a health department can deliver to its community. Policies also determine the allocation of resources and funding for infrastructure, services and technology. These things can be extremely important for an HCO to function smoothly. Communication and active engagement with policymakers and stakeholders can be a skill developed overtime. A public health leader must be all ears to the patient and community needs but also be aware of any policy shifts or future changes that might occur. Understanding the policymakers and actively communicating with them is also key to this role, but it can be learned (Karen 2023).

Data can be crucial in handling public health crises. A public health leader should develop a team of analysts or can learn the skill themselves to better understand a crisis situation and find a fix to it. For example, a pandemic can cause such a crisis. You can use data collected by CDC to solve issues near your community and remove any barriers (Kahn J. 2022). If a candidate has an extra skill set for data analysis they might have an edge to get hired.

**The Hillsboro County Home Health Agency (HCHHA) and its Governance**

The management team and its three divisions: Home Care, Private Duty and Community health. The HCHHA has a board with 21 members with committees for finance, professional advisory, public relations, building and grounds. Leadership styles differ when the HCO type changes. For a home care agency, leadership traits should surround high quality assurance and patient-centered care. A home care agency needs to be managed at the very entry level.

Reassessing the skills of your caregivers by holding regular meetings can be beneficial to maintain the level of care that you promise your patients (Redd, J. 2021). The board member might be incharge of the big picture, but the managers and caregivers are responsible for running the Home care facility smoothly. Another important trait a leader in this field requires is planning and making decisions that are set to achieve short and long term goals to hold people accountable for better results (LLC, M., & CEO, H.2023).

The private Duty division is to assist patients with daily activities and services as needed. These services are mainly driven by medicare or health insurance. Private duty home care providers assist with nursing care like medications and blood pressure screening. Registered Nurses (RNs) are responsible to administer medications and other services under the orders of a consulting physician . An issue with the private duty division at Hillsboro is that they never seem to have enough staff to meet their patient needs. It seems like this issue comes with low pay and less benefits to the staff (Seidel, L. F.2017). The person in charge of this department must maintain good relationships with staff which requires exceptional interpersonal skills, which can be learned overtime by working with the staff side by side. A home care manager should be able to delegate tasks and prioritize what's important over what is urgent. They must remain thoroughly organized to perform efficiently ( Kujawa, M. 2020). Key on-hire features might include operational efficiency and critical thinking as a skill set. Problem solving can be a skill learned or on-hire with experience working in this field.

**Webster Hospital leadership dynamics as an osteopathic hospital in Middleboro.**

The Webster hospital system consists of the hospital itself and a for-profit organization jointly owned by the hospital and the members of the medical staff. There are several leaders at several different levels of management in this hospital system. There is a senior management team which includes the president and the CEO, the vice president and the CFO and department heads for professional services and clinical services (Seidel, L. F., 2017). These leaders are responsible for running this hospital smoothly. There are 69 osteopathic physicians on the medical staff. These physicians must learn to become leaders to influence the care of patients and to achieve the greater goal. It can improve clinical outcomes for certain patients and empower well-being in the work environment (Hargett, C. 2017). Healthcare professionals and managers in the hospital should have empathy to understand the feelings of others. This can help them serve their patients in a better way. Having different levels in a hospital for administration, it can be difficult to communicate at first. Interpersonal skills and good communication can be essential for managers to instruct their team and other stakeholders. Setting an example can have a positive impact on your team. Leading by example can help your staff feel supported and help them with personal development ( Abdulla, M 2022).

Apart from physicians, other managers like healthcare managers, nurses, laboratory professionals and public health managers are other leaders involved in a hospital system. A middle level department manager can influence their department workers to better reach the goals of the Webster Hospital system (Bayot 2023).

Hospital department managers are extremely important for administration purposes. They are responsible for staffing, operations, budgeting and setting priorities, managing resources and many other duties. Some on-hire skills for a hospital manager can include excellent supervision skills, delegation, scheduling and exceptional organizational skills. Some operational skills can be learned after getting hired like budgeting, handling payroll, communications with upper level department managers, and making sure regulations are followed. After operational work, a departmental manager must set achievable goals and work collaboratively with other departments as well (AdventHealth University. 2021). The CEO and the president are the people who will decide what kind of goals their hospital system should achieve but the managers are the ones who make sure that those goals are achieved.

One of the most important on-hire skills that a healthcare leader serving in a hospital must have is financial acumen. Healthcare organizations like the Webster hospital and the home care agency expressed concerns about lacking funds to provide for the needs of their clients. These challenges affect the operations and long term viability of the facility. This makes financial acumen a critical skill for healthcare leaders to make sure that the HCO runs smoothly. They must learn about the revenue cycle of the HCO. The revenue cycle refers to the capturing, managing and collecting of services to patients. HCO struggles to collect on medical bills from patients due to the process of the reimbursement process being extremely complex sometimes. Medical bills tend to be lagged behind for patients using Medicare or Medicaid. Leaders must involve their financial team in understanding the stress that goes into paying medical bills. They should try to make it as easy as possible for the patients (Ledoux 2018).

**Ⅴ. Conclusion**

After reviewing all areas of leadership in these three HCOs, we hope to have a much better grasp of whether these organizations should change their methods or not. Leadership differs in each of these groups based on the skill set necessary. According to our textbook, leadership is not one-size-fits-all (Olden 2019). The individual must blend into their job tasks and learn as they lead.

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