

Physician Leadership Development

Swedish Health Services
Seattle, Washington



The Company

Swedish Health Services was a regional health care system with four hospitals, three acute care centers, and associated physician clinics. Now part of the Providence system, their 8000+ staff serve the Seattle metropolitan area.

Issue

Physician leaders play a critical role in the ever-changing landscape of health care today. Driving innovation, changing delivery models and improving patient outcomes all rely on physician leadership.

Physicians learn to care for patients. They are schooled in diagnostics and the latest treatment of disease. Nothing in their training prepares them to become leaders.

In a rapidly evolving world of health care, physicians need to be on top of the marketplace. Shifting business models, new reimbursement and evolving technology means physician practices must remain nimble.

Medical directors and medical staff leaders are two pivotal roles for managing physician performance. Historically, these roles were ambiguous and at times honorary. Offered as a means of recognition, different leaders would take on roles with varying levels of authority and commitment.

What would it take to align physicians with the Swedish strategy for navigating a dynamic health care marketplace? How could Swedish leverage the central role of physicians to drive innovation and key decisions in changing care models? How would they shift ideas of leadership to coach colleagues, manage conflict and lead change?



Solution

Administrative leaders recognized the need to align physicians with the strategy and leverage physician leadership.

To do this, we did the following:

- Profile the roles of medical director and medical staff leaders
- Identify critical skills for physician leaders
- Design a learning program to support physician leadership development
- Facilitate program delivery

Working with the Chief Medical Officer and Medical Chief of Staff, a leadership development program was tailored to the needs and constraints of physician leaders. Rich learning experiences were built to develop skills to lead change, navigate, coach colleagues and work across a complex and changing enterprise.

