

Review

Leadership and Relevance to Health Management Workforce Development: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

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Quality leadership is considered a critical component of organisational success. The way in which leadership is implemented plays a significant role in the implementation of quality management (Friman, 2024). Leadership is described as the ability to influence others towards a common goal. Healthcare organizations recognize the importance of leadership. Healthcare leadership frameworks are being adopted more widely in countries such as the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia to guide the development of leadership in healthcare organizations and ensure high-quality care for all (Lyons, 2020). The development of healthcare managers' leadership skills is critical to implementing and sustaining practice innovation, as well as providing high-quality patient- or client-related healthcare within an increasingly complex healthcare system (Chen, 2021). In order to improve healthcare service delivery, healthcare managers must adopt effective leadership strategies (De Brun, 2019; Hu, 2022).

Keywords: Clinical decisions, Health managers, Healthcare organization, Leadership, Mental health

INTRODUCTION

Leadership in Health Management

Among the most examined human behaviours is leadership. Research is needed to understand how health managers develop, conduct their workdays, manage and lead, and see themselves as leaders (Sheridan, 2016). It is critical for today's leaders to view leadership as a reciprocal process. According to a study conducted by the Centre for Creative Leadership, organizations are moving away from individual leadership to collective leadership. In the respondents' view, "leadership occurs throughout an organization through independent decision making." (Martin, 2007). According to complexity science, "leadership emerges as a result of interaction [relationships] among agents [individuals], as a result of relational interactions". According to this view, leadership arises through dynamic interactions [relationships]." (Sheridan, 2016).

Leading and developing leaders in health and human service sectors is widely recognized (Joubert, 2016; Smith, 2020). Leadership development is one of the key strategic elements of capacity-building initiatives and strategies in these sectors (Hussain, 2020; Figueroa, 2019; Forsyth, 2017). Workforce development in health sector is centred on leadership development, but this focus is ambiguous (Lacerenza, 2017; Miles, 2019).

Health information technology (HIT) has been emphasized in several healthcare programs worldwide and its value is still growing as healthcare faces increasing challenges (Laukka, 2020). Health information technologies have great potential for improving care quality, safety, patient-centredness, and cost-effectiveness (European Commission, 2009). HIT implementation may not always result in cost savings and improvements in quality of care. Poor leadership in healthcare organizations is one reason for HIT implemen-

tation failures (Walsh, 2017).

In order to improve implementation outcomes, it is necessary to recognize implementation determinants, such as barriers or facilitators (Krause, 2014). Implementation facilitators and barriers are often discussed in the literature, and healthcare leadership appears to be one of the key determinants of implementation (Abbott, 2014). Leaders' lack of support has been identified as one of the major barriers to implementation (Aarons, 2014). Ingebrigtsen et al., 2014, who performed a systematic literature review on the impact of clinical leadership on HIT adoption, identified seven leadership behaviors that led to successful HIT adoption outcomes: (1) communicating clearly about visions and goals, (2) providing support, (3) establishing a governance structure, (4) establishing training, (5) identifying and appointing champions, (6) addressing work process change, and (7) following up (Ingebrigtsen, 2014).

Differentiating leaders from leadership is essential. Leadership is described as being in an authoritative, hierarchical position responsible for directing a function or having direct reporting responsibilities. The role of HM professionals in transforming the practice of health information management is on the rise across the country, but little is known about what makes these professional leaders successful (Sheridan, 2016).

Coaching for Health Managers

In the private sector, coaching was originally used as a method for developing managers' leadership skills. Coaching was used by 93% of US-based global 100 companies for leadership development. The healthcare field first introduced coaching in the 1830s. In recent years, a number of studies have demonstrated that coaching can assist healthcare professionals in achieving personal and organization goals (Bradd, 2018; Hu, 2022). Coaching is an important leadership development strategy and a valuable investment for healthcare organizations' long-term success (Bureau, 2018, Hu, 2022).

In healthcare settings, effective social work requires leadership skills. For hospitals, primary care organizations, community and mental health organizations to effectively support, treat and advocate for those with mental illness, multiple health challenges, and those most vulnerable and marginalized, leadership skills are essential (Saxe, 2019; Hussain, 2020). Well-being at work is a crucial issue in health care (Ali et al., 2021). For health managers exposed to high stressors, coaching has been recommended, particularly as a way to empower and guide them (Trepanier et al., 2022). As a result of coaching, health care professionals must understand themselves and behave like members of a multidisciplinary team (Suikkala et al., 2021).

There is a difference between coaching and mentoring, but the two concepts are often confused. Coaches assist individuals or teams in setting and achieving specific goals, usually focused on improving performance within a defined period of time. Coaching fosters skill enhancement, personal development, and goal attainment by providing guidance, feedback, and support tailored to the needs and objectives of the coachee. In contrast, mentoring involves a nurturing relationship in which a more experienced individual (mentor) imparts knowledge, advice, and insights to a less experienced individual (mentee) in order to facilitate long-term professional and personal development. Often encompassing more than immediate career and life goals, it emphasizes holistic development, relationship-building, and wisdom transfer (Orduña, 2024).

A coaching process is defined as an interactive and interpersonal process that helps professionals acquire knowledge, skills, and fundamental actions for professional success (Sarroeira et al., 2020). Coaching promotes self-knowledge and goal setting through a deep analysis of the individual, provoking reflection on perspectives, mindsets, beliefs, and approaches that can lead to more sustainable behaviour (Cable and Graham, 2018). Using health coaching and healthcare providers' advice, many studies found that most patients had a positive attitude towards health and oral health (Mousa, 2019). In the event that healthcare providers are out of training for a longer period of time, the quality of care will decline (Mousa, 2013). Health care professionals use Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS) to make clinical decisions. In the prevention of diseases, Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS) can have a significant impact on patient outcomes (Alasiri, 2023).

Empowering Teams Through Respect and Civility

Health leadership models that traditionally use top-down, hierarchical structures with coercive punishments and extrinsic rewards are classified as command-and-control (Cherry, 2021). A leader who masters four or more types of leadership is the most effective, according to Goleman. The most effective leaders can switch seamlessly between authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching styles as the situation demands. Leadership styles can be adapted even within a specific situation to facilitate progress at different points (Smith, 2021). Emotional intelligence plays an increasingly important role here. Emotionally intelligent leaders, such as self-awareness and empathy, create environments where information is shared, trust is established, and a healthy risk is taken, whereas leaders who lack emotional intelligence create environments where anxiety and fear pervade. Serve as an example of high emotional intelligence by leading with empathy and self-awareness by focusing on the needs of others (Spears, 2005).

Leading with Open Communication

Most decisions require meaningful input from all team members, which is why servant leadership provides staff with relevant information, open communication, and a discussion process to facilitate informed decision-making, as well as regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms so that course correction can be made. An empowered workplace will challenge colleagues to work at a higher level, maximizing scope, and ultimately creating an organizational culture that can lead to a better future (Smith, 2021).

Challenges Facing Health Management

A continuous healthcare reform and an increase in health expenditure pose unique challenges to high-income, rapidly developing economies, as well as low-income countries with limited resources. The goal of reforms has been to control costs, consolidate hospitals for greater efficiency, and redesign primary healthcare. Healthcare managers and the key stakeholders in healthcare delivery have to adapt to changing business models for the delivery of care (Figueroa, 2021). Transitioning between existing and new healthcare cultures and practices is key to the role of healthcare managers. As healthcare delivery becomes increasingly personalized and technologically driven, bridging this gap is especially important. The advancement of knowledge and medical technology has increased the capability to deal with complex health needs, but integrating innovations into existing healthcare management practices requires strong change management skills (Briggs, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Globally, healthcare managers in national and international settings face complex challenges due to a shortage of human resources and rapid changes in healthcare systems. Current challenges and emerging needs of the global health management workforce revolve around efficiency-saving, change, and human resource management. A health manager's role is evolving and expanding in response to new priorities. A critical component of ensuring contemporary health leaders and managers is/are capable of responding to the current landscape is ensuring they have the tools to do so.

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