

RESEARCH BRIEF PHYSICIAN ENGAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

Topic:

Understanding How Physician Engagement Can Be Evaluated

Date:

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Issue:

- There is growing evidence greater levels of physician engagement leads to better performance in hospitals, primary care, quality, and safety. However, there is scarce information on processes to engage physicians to support health system performance and improvement and evaluate such processes
- Most literature has been looking at opinions and experiences but the aim of this research brief will be to showcase the current literature to understand how physician engagement can be evaluated:
 - Physician engagement strategies that have worked previously
 - Physician engagement strategies that have not worked
 - Potential frameworks or models that can be used

Background:

- Physician engagement is a term that encompasses a physicians' personal feeling or emotion to their interaction in the hospital organization in which they work. The term refers to psychological presence, performance disposition or a combination of these. [1]
 - Physician engagement is more than just consultation. [1]
- Organizations or health care systems that have more engaged physicians and other clinicians achieve better patient outcomes and the patients that they serve according to The King's Fund (2012). [2]
- Across most case studies and literature, physicians wanted to be engaged for "inherent satisfaction" rather than external rewards. More intrinsic motivation for physicians to engage showed more quality improvement in the physicians' job. [3, 4]

Current Status:

- There is limited information on how to better engage physicians since primarily, opinions and experiences have been used rather than concrete theories, models, or frameworks.
- Most often, well-designed Press Ganey or Gallup Surveys followed by interviews and focus groups have been used in the area of physician satisfaction. There is room to incorporate this into evaluating physician engagement.
 - Gallup Survey: this survey tells you where efforts need to be focused or tailored with the goal of building a high-performing and driven team.
 - Press Ganey Survey: used primarily for patient satisfaction to collect feedback on a hospital's best practices and health care delivery.
- There is no singular process to measure or evaluate physician engagement that has been developed hence, further research in already existing surveys and frameworks are being looked over in this brief.
- Additional research is needed to either create or modify existing strategies to evaluate physician engagement.

Evidence:

Strategies that have worked previously for physician engagement

- Bi-weekly meetings or regularly scheduled meetings between physicians and leadership and front-line physicians to help improve wellness and mindfulness [3,5]
 - Lessons learned: helped build intrinsic motivation rather than rely on external rewards and more connectedness with their colleagues. [3]
- The use of hospital champions or leaders to engage physicians in quality improvement
 - Almost like peer-to-peer engagement and learning
 - Lessons learned: fosters broader participation and communication with colleagues alongside raising awareness in areas such as systems and change management [5]
- Committed Hospital Leadership: when hospital board and leadership members are involved, there is growing interest and participation from physicians. [5]

Strategies that have not worked previously for physician engagement

- Using a theory-based implementation strategy [9]
 - Literature to date shows that strategies that follow a theory (NPT, TDF, TPB) are not successful in clinical practices. Most often, strategies just use a specific aspect of the theory in their physician engagement strategies.
- The Vancouver Medical Staff Association engagement charter. [10] Least engaging are:
 - Informing: receive information or announcements
 - Consulting: consulted on draft plans or issues, impacts the feedback or decisions
- Participation in learning modules/training: with an already busy schedule, participation in training and learning modules outside of work overwhelms and burdens the physicians. [1]

Options:

Potential Models or Frameworks that Could Be Used

- Spurgeon's Model of Medical Engagement [6]
 - A well-renowned model designed to specifically measure and assess medical engagement in leadership and management in the NHS. The aim and rationale of this model is to create a systematic framework for recommending strategies that are capable of enhancing ME and performance at work.
- The Ottawa Hospital Physician Engagement Agreement Strategy to improve the quality of care it provides to its patients [7]
 - This used qualitative inquiry about engagement and then concurrent focus groups where researchers collected and analyzed the physician perspectives' on engagement.
 - Systematic analysis of the verbal data was used to construct a statement of mutual understanding between physicians and the hospital (PE agreement).
- LEADS Framework by CIHR: "LEADS framework enables effective leaders to take responsibility for their own performance and continuous learning, to foster the development of others, to achieve quality results, to actively build coalitions and to create a climate of continuous improvement for organizational renewal." [8]
- Press Ganey or Gallup Surveys to see engagement instead of satisfaction. [11]
 - These are quick and easy qualitative surveys used to measure patient satisfaction and employee engagement respectively which can be incorporated into our evaluation of PE.
- Ivey Business Journal to build a high-engagement culture based on intrinsic motivation. [12]
 - Six-step strategic model to engage the employee in a work environment.

Conclusions:

- There are still gaps in literature on how physician engagement can be evaluated since there has been no standardized process created. Hence, a tool needs to be developed to evaluate physician engagement.
- Strategies that enhance physician engagement should ensure that hospital leadership and board members are involved to ensure better outcomes from physicians as they will tend to be more involved with hospital leaders.
- Intrinsic motivation tends to lead to better physician engagement outcomes.
- Existing tools are limited for evaluating physician engagement, further research in this area is needed.

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