Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams

WHY STANDARDS OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT FOR HEALTHCARE TEAMS ARE NECESSARY

The Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) has built the foundations for organisations to recruit and develop effective medical leaders and managers, through Leadership and management standards for medical professionals, supported by multi-level individual certification.

While the role and mandate of FMLM is to focus on the medical contribution to healthcare, FMLM also embraces the multi-professional environment within which we work.

We support individuals, teams and organisations by providing clarity on how to establish and sustain high performing multi-professional healthcare teams, irrespective of their background or sector to achieve better patient outcomes and increased productivity.

FMLM Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams focuses on four key domains - *Culture, Vision and Strategy, Management, and People and Relationships* - providing evidence-based guidance on what FMLM expects of healthcare teams.

In conjunction with the *FMLM Leadership and management self-assessment tool for healthcare teams*, these standards will help individuals build the structure to support healthcare teams and overcome the challenges posed by the constant change of team members.

Implemented effectively, we believe these standards will establish and sustain high performing multi-professional healthcare teams, which are important for the patient, the healthcare professional, the healthcare organisation and the system:

- **For patients**: strong medical leadership and management improve team performance and effective team working to reduce medical error, increase patient safety and reduce mortality.[1-3]

- **For healthcare professionals:** Central to maintaining good medical practice, leading and managing teams is vital for all doctors[4-6] and results in lower levels of staff stress, absenteeism and turnover.[7]

- **For healthcare organisations:** while over 90% of NHS staff report working in an effective team, the true estimate is nearer 40%, potentially exposing patients and members of that team to detrimental outcomes[8]. Effective teams always outperform individuals, producing better financial control, a healthier workforce and higher quality care.[9-11]

- **For healthcare systems:** with growing demand, increasing complexity and constrained resources, cooperation and collective leadership across intra- and inter-organisational boundaries is vital to prioritise patient care within all healthcare teams.[12]

WHAT IS A STANDARD?

We have chosen to use the definition of standards used by the Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service (SEQOHS) - *"A standard is something considered by an authority or by general consensus as a basis of comparison in measuring or judging adequacy or quality."*

DEVELOPMENT OF FMLM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STANDARDS FOR HEALTHCARE TEAMS

FMLM Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams have been derived from, and build upon, earlier work including the Care Quality Commission's *Well-Led Domain*, The International Organization for Standardization's *ISO 9000 – Quality management*, The British Standards Institute's *PAS 1616:2016*, national leadership frameworks and models, and research on medical leadership, management, engagement and teams.

These standards have been derived from thematic analysis, duplications were removed and standards were streamlined into the four key domains: *Culture, Vision and Strategy, Management, and People and Relationships* with digestible statements that were agreed by an expert reference group to ensure they were relevant and practical.

WHO THE STANDARDS APPLY TO

FMLM Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams are designed specifically for multi-professional healthcare teams whether in the NHS or any other sector.

HOW THE STANDARDS CAN BE USED

We believe that establishing *FMLM Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams* provides leaders and team members an opportunity for reflection on the collective performance of, and individual contribution to, the healthcare teams within which they work to help establish and sustain high performing multi-professional healthcare teams.

FMLM has also developed a *Leadership and management self-assessment tool* for healthcare teams. This offers an easily accessible and simple measure of team performance to facilitate team development.

Together, *FMLM Leadership and management self-assessment tool for healthcare teams* and *FMLM Leadership and management standards for healthcare teams* are designed as a guide to help build, sustain and/or develop team(s).

DOMAIN 1: CULTURE

Created, embedded and encouraged by leaders, culture is affected by their values and behaviours and has a crucial role in healthcare which must include trust, learning and accountability to realise the full potential of teams and deliver high quality care.[12-15]

1.1 The team and its stakeholders should develop a positive culture that is aligned to the wider organisation's culture and locally owned by all team members to deliver continual improvement of coordinated, high quality care that innovates and harnesses technology to meet the needs and improve the experience of patients.

1.2 The team should embrace diversity of background and thought, value different perspectives and work collaboratively across intra- and inter- organisational boundaries.

1.3 The team should develop physical and psychological safety for all team members. Trust, learning and accountability should be balanced to encourage candour, openness and honesty at all levels so that staff feel protected, able to discuss weaknesses, raise concerns and challenge questionable practice without fear of retribution.

1.4 The team must create time to proactively engage with internal and external stakeholders and reflect on performance. This should be used to ensure continuous learning and improvement from, for example, internal and external reviews, regulatory breaches, patient outcomes and feedback (including, compliments, concerns, complaints, errors and deaths).

DOMAIN 2: VISION AND STRATEGY

Good leadership is required to build a strategic vision that has alignment, engagement and commitment from all team members, people who use services and stakeholders to inspire and direct the delivery of high quality healthcare.[11, 12]

2.1 The team and its stakeholders should ensure the team is formally recognised within the organisation and co-design a robust and realistic vision for the team that is aligned to the wider organisation's vision and agreed on by all team members. This should consider resource constraints, the best available evidence and be aligned to the culture, the organisation's agenda and the wider needs of the health and social care economy.

2.2 The team should ensure their vision is communicated, agreed and regularly reviewed to maintain adaptability, provide clarity and inspire all team members to unite around opportunities to continually improve the quality of care while minimising risk.

2.3 The team leader(s) should ensure that positions within and membership of the team are clearly identified and that the necessary culture and skill mix is developed or brought in to deliver the team's objectives.

2.4 The team should ensure their vision is clear, accessible and promoted to stakeholders, alongside a clear team description that defines how the service is delivered and how they interact with partners.

DOMAIN 3: MANAGEMENT

Leaders require good data, resources and governance to analyse and control variance in a quest for continual improvement.[16]

3.1 The team leader(s) should ensure an operating plan, aligned to the team's culture and vision, has a manageable number of clear, challenging and measurable objectives that are agreed upon, monitored, reviewed and understood by all team members who are committed to achieving them.

3.2 The team leader(s) should ensure a systematic governance process with a comprehensive set of clear and robust key performance indicators is aligned to those of the organisation and monitors progress to:

– Provide continual quality assurance against internal and external requirements.

– Promptly detect individual and organisational risks to delivering high quality care, including resource constraints, changes, and challenges to the service so that they can be mitigated without delay.

– Provide accurate, timely and relevant data that is available for all staff to use, share and challenge to support continual improvement.

– Monitor external teams or services involved to ensure they adhere to the culture, vision and standards expected.

3.3 The team should ensure all team members receive appropriate orientation to the team, be comfortable and clear about individual roles, have a skill mix with well defined, communicated and understood responsibilities, have clear accountability for learning and provide the highest quality care possible.

3.4 The team should meet regularly and ensure effective and timely communication is maintained between all stakeholders to promote collaboration, respect and a shared decision-making process that is understood by all.

3.5 The team leader(s) should ensure regular individual performance reviews address sub- standard performance and help team members to understand their role in achieving the culture and vision of the clinical service, through developmental conversations that build collaborative personal development plans.

3.6 The team leader(s) should reward positive team behaviours and celebrate individual and collective achievements.

DOMAIN 4: PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Healthcare professionals require autonomy, mastery and purpose within their practice to be empowered to deliver high quality healthcare by competent leaders who provide positivity and embody a compassionate and collective leadership approach.[12, 17-19]

4.1 The team leader(s) should meet the appropriate core values and behaviours expected in *FMLM Leadership and management standards for medical professionals.*

4.2 The team should ensure all team members hold themselves and each other to account for behaving according to the team's values and their own professional standards, with systems in place to allow concerns to be escalated appropriately when they arise.

4.3 The team leader(s) should ensure succession plans are in place and that there is a supporting talent management strategy that supports stretch opportunities, exposes team members to differing perspectives, offers reflective experiences, rewards engagement and encourages good performance at all levels.

4.4 The team should recognise, without conflict, the team leader(s) but embrace a collaborative approach that engages, equips and empowers individuals to lead innovations and improvements in the quality of the clinical service.

4.5 The team should demonstrate compassionate leadership[17] to:
   – Attend, understand and empathise with stakeholders to help adopt thoughtful and appropriate responses that deliver a compassionate response.
   – Provide self-belief, emphasising individual and collective purpose to the team's and organisation's objectives, allowing individuals to feel positive, proud and motivated to participate.
   – Encourage trust through the generation of collaborative, supportive and appreciative professional and social relationships across both internal and external teams.
   – Encourage constructive debate and challenge, while resolving conflict quickly and effectively.

4.6 The team should be offered appropriate developmental opportunities by the organisation and engage with them by working in partnership with colleagues, patients and wider stakeholders to continually improve themselves and the team.

4.7 The team should ensure that new team members, including students and/or trainees, are welcomed, supported and valued, through appropriate induction, supervision and mentoring with time released for training.

DEFINITIONS

Team
Where members hold clear shared objectives, working closely and interdependently, and maintain reflexivity by systematically reviewing their effectiveness and adapting on a regular basis.[8]

Culture
A pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group has learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.[13]

Quality
Our definition of quality incorporates the six quality dimensions as defined by the Institute of Medicine (1990) to ensure that care provided is: effective, efficient, safe, timely, person centred, and equitable.[20]

Stakeholders
Individuals, groups and organisations, including a range of equality groups and those with protected characteristics, both internally and externally who are involved with the team.

Key Performance Indicators
Should include a range of clinical, operational and financial domains which adhere to internal and external requirements and consider process, outcome and balancing measures.

Resources: Including human, financial and physical (environment, facilities, equipment, information technology) capital.

SUPPORTING TOOLS AND GUIDANCE

FMLM Leadership and Management Self-Assessment Tool for Healthcare Teams. This is available on **www.fmlm.ac.uk/FMLMTeamSelf-AssessmentTool**

FMLM Leadership and Management Standards for Medical Professionals. This is available on **www.fmlm.ac.uk/Standards**

FUTURE WORK

FMLM will continue to work with stakeholders on other areas of support to implement the standards for medical professionals and healthcare teams.

FMLM APPLIED

FMLM Applied is an extensive network of high profile, medical and non-medical associates offering expertise and hands-on support to provide a collaborative, high impact, efficient and flexible transfer of skills.

It has been developed to support healthcare organisations to invest in medical leadership, enhance performance and improve clinical outcomes for patients. Drawing on the evidence base, our *Standards for Medical Professionals* and our *Standards for Healthcare Teams* we provide bespoke packages of support, tailored to the needs of doctors, teams and organisations.

SUMMARY

These standards are not a static document. FMLM is committed to regularly reviewing and refining all aspects. The intention is to be aspirational and stimulate improvement and consistency in the medical leadership of healthcare teams; feedback from individuals and organisations has been constructive and supportive. However, no matter how erudite the end product is, it is what we all do with the standards that will make the difference.

FMLM is confident that this is an essential step towards professionalising medical leadership and management. Furthermore, we believe enhanced medical leadership will improve the quality and outcome of patient care, improve organisational performance and play a major role in the continuing drive to make UK healthcare the best in the world.

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THE FACULTY OF MEDICAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

2nd Floor,
6 St Andrews Place,
London NW1 4LB
Telephone: 020 3075 1471
Email: enquiries@fmlm.ac.uk

The Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM) supports the delivery of better healthcare outcomes for patients in the UK by developing and promoting excellence in medical leadership and management through networks, resources and career opportunities for doctors of all grades and specialties.

FMLM has launched the leadership and management standards for healthcare teams and supports a diverse and dynamic membership community. It is the UK professional home those who are both current and aspiring medical leaders and managers.

For more information or to download further copies of these standards please visit: **www.fmlm.ac.uk**

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