



European Junior Doctors Permanent Working Group (EJD) Policy Paper on Management and Leadership Training

SUMMARY

Management and leadership skills are an essential part of every physician's professional competencies. Currently, management and leadership training is a part of postgraduate medical training (PGT), and even basic medical education in some countries. However, the situation varies strongly between European countries. The EJD believes management and leadership training must be provided for free for every physician as an integral part of both undergraduate and postgraduate training.

BACKGROUND

Whether working as the medical director of a multinational health conglomerate or as a family doctor in a small primary care team, a physician always has managerial and leadership responsibilities, and thus such skills are vitally important for every physician. While training in these areas is provided during the PGT of doctors in some European states, in others it is not.

EJD SURVEY ON MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

In 2014–2015, the EJD conducted a survey among its member countries about management and leadership training in PGT. 12 out of the 19 member countries (63%) answered the survey. Management and leadership training is provided as a part of PGT in only five countries: Finland, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Despite this, all respondents thought this training should be provided and the majority thought it should be compulsory. Management and leadership training is rare also in basic medical education.

Currently, the extent of management and leadership training in PGT varies from a 6-hour seminar to 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System; equals up to 900 hours of work) of blended learning. The topics covered include, but are not limited to, leadership, managing human resources, health economics and organisation, interpersonal skills, and legislation. Training methods include but are not limited to lectures, portfolios, seminars, and trainees' own projects. In some countries, physicians in PGT have to pay for the management and leadership training.

CONCLUSIONS

Structured management and leadership training in PGT is unfortunately still rare in Europe. However, good benchmarking examples exist, and they should be applied all over the continent. Introductory level management and leadership training should start during undergraduate medical education to prepare students for work in healthcare. Subjects in basic medical education could include: structure of the healthcare system, legislation, basics of finances, and quality in healthcare. In postgraduate medical education, more advanced topics should be covered, and could include: personal leadership and time management, operational control and evaluation, communication skills, conflict management and human resources management. The training programs should be developed in cooperation with experienced physician leaders, and the training should be provided by qualified educators.

To ensure the future supply of qualified medical leaders:

- 1) management and leadership skills must be seen as a core competence for all physicians;
- 2) training in management and leadership should start already during basic medical education and be provided for all junior doctors as a part of postgraduate training;
- 3) the training should cover at least the basics of organisations, management and leadership, social welfare and health care system, managing human resources, managing competence, interpersonal skills, communication, operational control, and operational evaluation.
- 4) the training should be compulsory and free; and
- 5) the training programs should be evaluated regularly.