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CHIEF OF STAFF

CHIEF PROGRESS REPORT

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**“Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfills the same function as pain in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things.”–
Winston Churchill**

The focus on quality marches on!

The last item to tackle on the 5-point plan is that of performance evaluations and Leadership training. This is probably the one that will be the hardest to implement, sustain and perfect but will arguably have the longest benefit. This month I will begin a series of evaluations with all the Department Chiefs and Medical Directors. This will be a first step in setting the goals and expectations for these evaluations in the future.

Performance evaluations can be one of the most important communication tools we can use for both our medical leaders in the organization as well as the Professional Staff. It is a time to provide feedback, recognize quality performance and set expectations for future job performance. It is also a time to have candid conversations about performance that is lacking and how performance can be improved. These evaluations can take many forms including a “top-down” review, peer reviews, 360-degree reviews and even self-assessments. They need not be complicated; they just need to be done.

Providing feedback – So often we only focus on the negatives. In my past roles with the University, over 90% of the “feedback” about residents and students that I received was about a problem encounter or a disrespectful interaction. On the rare occasion that I hear about a positive exchange, it brightened my day and when that feedback was provided to the learner, it did the same for them and gave them momentum to continue with their great work. The same can be said of our medical leaders in the hospital. Providing feedback can be very difficult but it is necessary. We all need objective feedback on how we are doing, otherwise, we may continue down a path that we think is the right one only to realize we have been blind to our shortcomings.

Recognizing quality performance – it’s ok to take a pause and acknowledge great work being done. We have some of the hardest working professional staff and medical leaders who devote an enormous amount of time to their craft and take on added responsibilities often at the expense of their own personal

lives. It can sometimes feel as though this work goes unrecognized. Having a feedback framework allows for an opportunity to highlight some of the great work and encourage ongoing excellence.

Setting expectations for future job performance – if you cannot articulate your goals, you will not hit your target. Setting expectations means that you can clearly articulate in writing what you are looking to achieve. This then builds a mutually clear expectation with everyone working with you about where you are going and how you are going to get there. It also helps to delineate the “why” of what you are doing.

Professional staff members in general do not like criticism; however, feedback tools are not intended to be punitive, but rather to support quality improvement at the individual level, which would hopefully translate at a corporate level as well. We need to keep in mind that these processes are designed to support career planning and to serve as a tool to enhance quality of care for our patients. The organization is invested in the success of our Professional Staff, which is why this is priority.

Now that the wheels have been set in motion on this five-point plan to improve quality in the organization, we will see where it takes us. I will continue to provide regular updates on these points but will also provide my insights on many other areas in future CPRs.

Until next month,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wassim Saad', written in a cursive style.

Wassim

Do you have questions, comments or thoughts about the topic discussed this month? Any ideas for future newsletters? Feel free to contact me anytime by e-mail wassim.saad@wrh.on.ca