MODULE 6

WORK CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP ETHICS

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IFCC EMD - Committee on Clinical Laboratory Management (C-CLM)
CONTENTS OF THIS MODULE

- Ethics and Laboratory Medicine
- Defining Ethical Leadership
- The Foundations of Ethical Leadership in the Clinical Laboratory
- Workplace culture and the Clinical Laboratory
- Ethical Laboratory Leadership and Maintaining a Culture of Quality
- Medical Error, Utilization Management and Ethical Responsibility
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By completing this module, participants will be able to:

► Describe what it means to be an Ethical Leadership
► Describe the relationship between laboratory culture and quality of service
► Understand the importance of ethical conduct to gaining respect and trust
► Describe how ethical leadership can impact laboratory culture and quality
Introduction

Work Culture and Ethics in Laboratory Leadership
Work Culture and Leadership Ethics

Ethical Accountability

Colleagues
Staff
Society
Patients

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Ethics and Laboratory Medicine

“Moral principles that govern a person's or group's behavior.”

— Oxford Dictionary

“a system of moral principles that apply values and judgments to the practice of medicine.”

— International Federation of Medical Students' Associations
Ethics and Laboratory Medicine

“…good technical practice accompanied by proper attitudes and behavior. In deciding what is proper, reference is often made to moral values voluntarily adhered to within the community and to standards espoused in various codes of professional practice.”

— “Ethical practice in laboratory medicine and forensic pathology” WHO 1999
# Ethics and Laboratory Medicine

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<th>Foundations</th>
<th>Values and principles of the community and organization</th>
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<td>Professional Codes of Conduct</td>
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<td>Decisions of Laboratory Professionals</td>
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<td>Actions of Laboratory Professionals</td>
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Defining Ethical Leadership

Work Culture and Ethics in Laboratory Leadership
Defining Ethical Leadership

Visible
- Statements
- Actions

Invisible
- Character
- Mindset
- Values & Principles
- Decision making

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Defining Ethical Leadership

Philosophical principles
Religious beliefs
Societal and Cultural Norms
Historical factors

Ethics

“Ethical dilemmas can sometimes be between two rights.”

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Defining Ethical Leadership

**Prudence**
- Compromise between extremes
- Insight to serve benefit and minimize harm
- Doing the right thing
- Balance all facts in decisions affecting others

**Fortitude**
- Courageously standing firm when challenged
- Doing the right thing in face of adversity

**Temperance**
- Self-Control
  - Moderation relative to personal needs
  - Diminished concern for power and personal gain

**Justice**
- Willingness to give others what they deserve
  (based on law and principles of fairness)
- Give due credit and show respect

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Defining Ethical Leadership

- Act according to personal beliefs and ethical standards.
- Altruistic motivation
- Possesses honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, fairness, and objectivity

- Communicates ethics and values
- Makes decisions based on high ethical standards
- Inspires others in a vision
- Builds justice-based community
- Role model of ethical conduct
- Demonstrates ethical accountability

Ethical Person

Moral Manager

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The Foundations of Ethical Leadership in the Clinical Laboratory

Work Culture and Ethics in Laboratory Leadership
The Foundations for Ethical Leadership in the Clinical Laboratory

- National & International Standards
  - WHO
  - ISO15189
  - National Standards (e.g. Canadian Standards Association)
- Legislative Acts/Laws/Regulations
- Codes of Conduct
- Organizational Values and Mission Statement
ISO 15189:2012 addresses ethics in Section 4.1.1.3

“...No involvement in any activities that would diminish confidence in the laboratory’s competence, impartiality, judgment or operational integrity”

“management and personnel are free from any undue commercial, financial, or other pressure and influences that may adversely affect the quality of work”

“where potential conflicts in competing interests exist, they shall be openly and appropriately declared”

“there are appropriate procedures to ensure that staff treat human samples, tissues or remains according to relevant legal requirements”

“confidentiality of information is maintained”
WHO 1999 “Ethical practice in laboratory medicine and forensic pathology: four principles of medical ethics”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Fairness in distributing benefit, risks, costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beneficence</td>
<td>Best interest of the patient maintained in all actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-maleficence</td>
<td>Minimizing harm as not to out-weigh benefits of treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Respect for patient decisions for self and enabling informed choices.</td>
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Professional Codes of Conduct

Key areas

1. Quality and Excellence
2. Continuous Professional Development
3. Compliance with Codes of ethics and conduct
4. Honest and integrity
5. Relationships with others
6. Independence and impartiality
7. Confidentiality
8. Conflict with moral/ethical beliefs....
Professional Codes of Conduct

Key areas

1. Professionalism/Honesty/Integrity in research and service
2. Uphold high standards in research and service.
3. Disclosure of medical error and incompetent behaviors
4. Respect for privacy and confidentiality
5. Continued Professional Development
6. Promote safety and welfare of others
7. Avoid and disclose potential conflicts of interest
8. Comply with laws and advocate for patients


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Legislative Acts/Laws/Regulation

Acts/Laws/Regulation
• Access to Information
• Privacy
• Labor
• Controlled Substances
• Criminal Code
• Transport of Dangerous Goods

Health Acts


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Organizational Missions/Goals/Vision

**Mission**
- Reason for organizations existence
- Usually presented as a statement of purpose, philosophy and values

**Vision**
- Indicates the desired future state of the organizations work or what is wanted to be achieved.

**Values**
- Fundamental ideas and principles that guide thinking and actions.
- Establishes workplace culture

**Goals**
- Specific desired outcomes through an organizations operation.

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Organizational Missions/Goals/Vision

FRONTLINE GOALS

The frontline group collated their issues into the following goals:

1. **Clinical Excellence Goal:** To develop a more efficient process of workload distribution, maximize staff utilization and create an awareness of fiscal responsibility.

2. **Communication Goal:** To create a system of communication internally and externally that is specific, timely and responsive for all stakeholders

3. **Morale (Workplace Environment) Goal:** To provide a positive workplace environment that promotes accountability to create a professional and congenial liaison between management and staff, resulting in an environment where staff will flourish

4. **Education Goal:** To develop an educational program that is accessible to all lab employees and that allows sufficient time and resources to become professional leaders.

5. **Human Resources / Staffing Goal:** To create a workplace environment that reflects an increase in morale, sustainability and maintenance of staffing levels resulting in increased productivity and efficiency.
Workplace Culture and the Clinical Laboratory

Work Culture and Ethics in Laboratory Leadership
The ethical challenge for quality and patient safety

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Health Organization</th>
<th>Clinical Laboratory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Safe High Quality Health Care</td>
<td>• Cultural impact on quality, safety and effectiveness of services</td>
<td>• Cultural impact on quality, safety and effectiveness of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe High Quality Diagnostics services</td>
<td>• Leadership accountability</td>
<td>• Ethical conduct ensure quality, safety and sustainability</td>
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Laboratory Culture is established by behaviors, how actions are performed and communicated, and interpreted – the general experience associated with the workplace and its staff.

Affected by:
- Local language
- Prevailing ideas
- Goals and aspirations
- Values and accepted norms
- Assumptions and beliefs and habits
- Laboratory Leadership

Leaders define, empower but can also change workplace culture.
Ethical and Cultural Challenges

• Systemic factors in the organization
• Organizational Culture
• Inadequate emphasis on Quality of Services leads to
  • Poorer patient outcomes
  • Inefficiency and poorer economic outcomes
• Leaders are accountable for successes and failures of the organization
Culture of Quality

“Quality is the result of a carefully constructed cultural environment.”

Phil Crosby
In best seller “Quality is Free
Culture of Quality

The Harvard Business Review describes the **culture of quality** as one where there is “an environment in which employees not only follow quality guidelines but also consistently see others taking quality-focused actions, hear others talking about quality, and feel quality all around them.”

Blame Culture versus Just Culture

Just Culture
- Proactive
- Empowers staff
- Reports errors and OFIs
- Low cost for quality
- System Focused
- Best Practice and QI

Blame Culture
- Reactive
- Fear among staff
- Buries errors and mistakes
- High cost for quality
- Activity Focused
- Compliance with Standards
Culture Change

Begin with leadership

Reinforce and communicate desired values

Work on staff motivation to gain commitment to change

Root out obstacles

Reassign resources to new priorities

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Ethical Laboratory Leadership and maintaining a Culture of Quality

Leaders that model ethical behavior

Leaders that adopt values/mission/vision of organization

Leaders that see difficult situations through to completion in an ethical manner

Leaders that openly communicate and share ethical wisdom

Leaders that are aware and reflect on daily ethical realities

Leaders that consider all aspects of the testing process from an ethical point of view

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The Expanded Diagnostic Testing Process

The Physician Brain Phase 1

The Lab

The Patient Phase 1

Signs/Symptoms/Concerns/Risks

History and Physical Exam

Decision to test

Complete Requisition

Patient Identification

Specimen Collection

Process/Transport/Store

Sample Analysis (Testing)

Report

Interpretation

Management Decision

Action

Consideration of need to test

Consideration of which tests

Consideration of diagnostic strategy

Pre-analytical

Analytical

Post-analytical

Understanding of test limitations

Consideration of lab interpretative info

Consideration of effects of variability

Test result in context of other information

The Physician Brain Phase 2

The Patient Phase 2

Signs/Symptoms/Concerns/Risks + outcomes/effects

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Quality Failures

Pre Analytical (45 to 70%)
- Sample type & amount
- Poor quality
- Identification
- Sample handling & transport.

Analytical (5 to 15%)
- Equipment failure/malfunction
- Interference
- Sample mix-up

Post Analytical (15 to 50%)
- TAT
- Data entry
- Reporting
- Follow-up analyses.

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Diagnostic Errors

- **Delayed**: Sufficient information was availability earlier
- **Wrong**: Diagnosis different from the correct one
- **Missed**: No diagnosis made
Diagnostic Errors

- **Pre-Pre-Analytical**
  - Failure to order test
  - 55% of missed/delayed Dx in ambulatory care
  - 58% of errors in emergency department

- **Laboratory**
  - Pre-Analytical/Analytical/Post-Analytical
  - Excess TAT, poor accuracy, poor sample quality etc

- **Post-Post-analytical**
  - Incorrect interpretation.
  - Failure to inform patients of abnormalities (~7%)
  - Inappropriate follow-up of results (up to ~60%)


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Medical Error, Utilization Management and Ethical Responsibilities

- **Patient Advocacy**: • assure laboratory services serve the patient’s best interests

- **Communication and Disclosure of Medical error**: • Occurrence reporting and patient disclosure where circumstances require

- **Educate, Inform, and intervene where risk exists**: • where there is potential for diagnostic error based on misuse of laboratory services

- **Utilization Management**: • Work with stakeholders to assure laboratory services provide greatest value and clinical benefit to patients
“there is no such thing as excellent organizations, only those that believe in continuous improvement.”

Tom Peters

in best seller “In search of excellence”
Continual Improvement

- Surveys and Complaints
- Internal Audits of QMS
- Internal Audit of testing processes
- PT and EQA
- Health & Safety
- Equipment & diagnostic systems
- Personnel (Competency assessments/Annual Review)

Beneficence
Ethical Leadership
Non-maleficence

Excellence in Service

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Snapshot of an ethical laboratory leadership in action

- Keeps Organizational Goals, Practice Standards, Codes of Conduct at forefront
- Develops and Communicates good policy and procedures
- Supports staff and treats all fairly
- Removes obstacles to quality of service
- Provides training opportunities on ethical behavior

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Discussion Points on Leadership ethics and workplace culture

- Describe what Culture of Quality would be like at your workplace. Identify challenges to achieving it and how these can be overcome.
- How is Quality Management an ethical issue for lab leaders?
- How is Utilization Management an ethical Issue for lab leaders?
- Describe ethical laboratory leadership in action in the following situations:
  - A laboratory error has occurred potentially resulting in patient harm.
  - Your laboratory is faced with a 10% cut in its budget.
  - There is evidence that there is overuse of a lab test.
  - You have concerns about the quality of service in your lab: high TAT, excessive sample spoilage, poor staff morale etc.