A Dedicated Leadership Module in Physician Assistant Education

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INTRODUCTION

- Physician assistants (PAs) need to have leadership qualities and the willingness to serve in leadership positions as graduates
- PA programs have not consistently implemented leadership pedagogy into their curricula
- This educational innovation provided three two-hour leadership sessions and one leadership activity in the clinical phase of the PA curriculum

EVIDENCE FOR INNOVATION

- 173 accredited PA programs were surveyed
- 95% of program directors believe that leadership important
- Only 12% of the programs provide any stand-alone, dedicated leadership training

PURPOSE

The underlying hypothesis for the dedicated leadership training includes:

- PA students who are exposed to leadership discussion and activities will find it to be a beneficial learning experience
- Students who have completed the leadership sessions will have a higher likelihood of accepting a leadership role in their career
- Students will have a better understanding of their leadership qualities after completing the leadership sessions

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Discussing and examining the leadership qualities and attributes of effective leaders
2. Completing a leadership style assessment survey
3. Discussing and examining leadership possibilities within healthcare and the PA field
4. Completing a team-based activity through applying leadership qualities to achieve effective leadership within healthcare

METHODS

Students answered preliminary questions regarding their educational background in leadership and the health sciences. The survey below was completed using a Likert scale ranging from 1-Strongly agree to 5-Strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Score</th>
<th>Question number</th>
<th>Question text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have a full understanding of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel comfortable with my ability to set goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I have an interest in developing leadership in others</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have a commitment to one’s responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I have clarity in my personal values</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I possess conflict resolution skills</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I am confident in my decision-making abilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I have the ability to deal with complexities, uncertainty, and ambiguity</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I have the ability to plan and implement programs and activities</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am willing to take risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I have an understanding of leadership theories</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I am confident in holding a leadership position as a physician assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>I am willing to hold a leadership position after graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>I feel leadership is an important component to physician assistant education</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>I think leadership education is beneficial for physician assistants</td>
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LEADERSHIP SESSIONS

Session 1:
A. Leadership Theories
B. What makes a good leader?

Session 2:
A. Psychogeometrics, What shape am I? 
B. How to work with others.

Session 3:
What leadership roles are available to PAs?

Session 4:
Team based activity applying leadership and Design Thinking skills

OUTCOMES

CONCLUSION

Early data from the leadership modules implementation shows that:

- Students’ understanding of their self, values, and leadership skills improved
- They feel more confident in their ability to hold a leadership position as a PA
- Students’ interest in holding a leadership position post graduation, developing others and civic responsibility decreased

A survey will be sent to participating students one year post-employment to re-evaluate.

REFERENCES