POSTER #5

Physiotherapists' Perspectives on Professional Practice Leadership Models: Key Features to Enhance Physiotherapy Practice

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Purpose: To explore professional practice leadership models (PPLMs) within the Toronto Academic Health Science Network (TAHSN) by outlining current TAHSN PPLMs, identifying elements of PPLMs from physiotherapists' perspectives, and determining key features of PPLMs that enhance physiotherapy (PT) practice.

Methods: This qualitative, cross-sectional study used semi-structured focus groups to explore PT clinicians' knowledge about their facility's PPLM, physiotherapists' role within the PPLM, the impact of leaders on PT practice, the impact of the PPLM on job satisfaction, and the development of an ideal PPLM. Transcripts were coded using qualitative software and data analysis followed an inductive approach to develop themes.

Results: We conducted eight focus groups, representing six TAHSN facilities (four organizations). Five key features of PPLMs emerged from physiotherapists' perspectives: 1) support networks to navigate practice issues; 2) organizational structures that foster collaboration and PT community; 3) professional development opportunities for continuing education, mentorship, and career advancement; 4) the influence of the leader in professional practice; and, 5) the balance of workload and accountabilities of the leader in professional practice. Each key feature encompassed a group of interrelated elements, defined as components of PPLMs that influenced PT practice.

Conclusion: Our study is the first to explore elements and key features of TAHSN PPLMs as they relate to PT. From physiotherapists' perspectives, we derived five recommendations to enhance PPLMs with respect to the PT profession. Findings can be used to inform and optimize PPLMs, such that publicly funded healthcare facilities can evolve alongside the continuously changing healthcare landscape.