

The Leadership Forum

Sustainability—Job Structure and Development Opportunities

By Will Southern, MD (wsouther@montefiore.org), Professor of Clinical Medicine, Chief, Division of Hospital Medicine, Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center, New York, NY



Will Southern

At our institution, the philosophy is that academic hospitalist job sustainability is dependent upon two factors: a job's structural aspects and developmental opportunities.

The structural aspects of a position include both the workload (number patients, hours, days) and working environment. These features can be measured at a single time point, and, traditionally, sustainability has been discussed focusing only on these aspects.

The developmental opportunities

of a position are the extent to which academic and personal growth for a faculty member is facilitated. We believe that a sustainable academic job must include the opportunities and support to create one's own quirky, personalized academic job. These aspects can only be measured longitudinally over time.

To facilitate development, we have focused on faculty development programming, advanced training opportunities, and an effort to actively

encourage each member to find interesting morsels to add flavor to their hospitalist position. This focus has led to a stable and heterogeneous faculty who are engaged in scholarship in interesting and personalized ways.

In short, job sustainability is not only about the hours worked and patients seen; sustainability requires the opportunity to develop as an individual and the flexibility to construct an interesting position suitable for both personal and professional growth.