

LEADERSHIP EDUCATION: PART II

What I Learned from the LEAD Program

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In 2015, I had the opportunity to participate in the Association of Chiefs and Leaders of General Internal Medicine (ACLGIM) LEAD program after being recommended by my mentors Lauris Kaldjian, MD, PhD, and Scott Wilson, DO. The LEAD program was started in 2014 by Deb Burnet, MD, from the University of Chicago and April Fitzgerald, MD, of John Hopkins University—it was designed for junior- to mid-career faculty members to develop their leadership skills. Each participant is paired with a coach to engage and interact with via monthly telephone or Skype conferences and networking at the annual meeting. In addition, the core educational modalities for LEAD participants are monthly independent readings/assignments with online discussions in order to gain the fundamentals of the principles of leadership. The mission of the LEAD program is to train medical leaders in the area of service to others, place the needs of others before self needs, to place honesty and honor before individual gain, facilitate compassionate quality care, and to focus on the health outcomes of the entire medical community.

My coach was Joseph Li, MD, SFHM, FACP Section Chief of Hospital Medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. From the beginning, Dr. Li provided great advice on a wide variety of issues, such as how to negotiate contracts, how to work with the C-suite to make the case for expanding a service line, and how to complete the

hospitalist schedule on time. He shared his network of colleagues with me to help ease my transition to the University of Pennsylvania in January 2016.

I also learned a lot from the monthly readings. As physicians, we were not trained in medical school or residency to be leaders. We were taught basic knowledge and how to take care of patients. However, especially in academic medicine, the ability to be an effective leader is a very important part of our job description. In addition, there was a lot of self-reflection to determine one's own weaknesses, strengths, and what we felt like were important aspects of leadership. I found it most comforting that many parts of leadership can be learned.

I was able to apply many of the LEAD readings during my Midwest SGIM presidency this year. For example, we made changes based on feedback and personal experiences—some were easy, such as reducing the number of workshops, while others were more challenging, such as designing a meeting to meet the needs of trainees, junior faculty, and senior faculty while conforming to budgets, timelines, and staffing changes. In addition, we followed tradition with successful practices, such as Updates in General Medicine and mentorship opportunities, and learned from other regions with innovations, including a second poster session, Updates in Hospital Medicine, an ultrasound workshop, and adding a midwest scholarship. Despite making some mistakes in scheduling and having some delays in the

process, we hope to have a very productive meeting this year.

The LEAD program was also invaluable as a tool to help me network with leaders in GIM, seek out volunteers to help out with the meeting, and, most of all, to assist me in my own research project on how to develop a national curriculum and assessment tool for perioperative medicine. Lastly, the program enabled me to reach out to Kurt Pfeifer, MD, a leader of the SGIM Perioperative Medicine Interest Group, to solicit feedback on an electronic survey and then present its findings to leaders at the National SGIM. This opportunity opened up the process of finding collaborators nationally to help develop and test the curriculum. These experiences also gave me the confidence to ask other national leaders for guidance and collaboration.

In short, the LEAD program helped me and my 14 classmates to learn the tools and gain the confidence to become leaders in GIM. The LEAD program hopes to further involve LEAD alumni from 2014 and 2015 via both online and at future ACLGIM and SGIM meetings. We hope that this will help LEAD alumni stay active in SGIM and ACLGIM and develop networks and opportunities for leadership in SGIM and ACLGIM, career networking, educational and academic collaborations, reunions at annual meetings and regional meetings, and serve as a sounding board for difficult problems and questions that arise in our work as leaders in GIM. Please contact us if you have any questions about the LEAD program and how you can get involved.