

Successfully Leading Change in Healthcare Organization

On Friday, November 13th, the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) hosted their 2015 Fall Collaborative. With the intent of successfully leading change in healthcare organizations, a panel discussion featuring George Miller, CEO, CommunityCare Health Centers and Steve Hoeft, Chief of Operations Excellence, Baylor, Scott & White Health was moderated by Kate Henderson, President, Seton Healthcare Family.

Kicking off the conversation, Kate asked the panelists how they identify areas for change. For CommunityCare, George responded that this was a critical task inherent to the strategic planning process. With the help of five separate focus groups, a report was prepared for the CommunityCare board members outlining areas for improvement. Steve also agreed that this activity required input from multiple parties, including employees, physicians and consumers. Utilizing consultants for HCAHPS review or other external data can also facilitate group "huddles" and make change meaningful as noted by Kate.

Once the need for change has been identified, Kate inquired how the group manages this process. George pointed out that organizations should be enthusiastic and explains the reasons for change. Steve reiterated the need for organizations to spend time educating their staff and physicians regarding the need for change since it is best established with trust and respect. In addition, Baylor Scott & White Health has found it easier to pilot new processes prior to implementing them. According to Kate, it is also helpful to address problems with a wide variety of constituents and seek solutions, as ownership empowers change agents.

Last, but not least, the group was queried about the sustainment of change. Reiterating previous statements, George mentioned that it is important to stay focused on five goals to be the employer of choice. Continuously seek to improve patient experience, productivity and decrease cost, while improving access. Per Kate, healthcare executives should walk the talk and step into other's roles to better understand issues. Furthermore, feedback and personal notes have accelerated the Seton Family of Healthcare's role as a learning organization.

Regarding early careerist advice, the group noted that it is important to work on professional relationships, seek mentors, volunteer for growth opportunities, lead change and seek variety.

With special appreciation for the event co-sponsor, Texas State University HCAD Department, the Central Texas ACHE chapter would also like to thank the presenters for sharing their insights and best practices regarding healthcare innovation. For more information on future events, please visit us at ww.centraltexas.ache.org or send us an email at info@centraltexas.ache.org.