

A successful quality improvement program must have an effective physician engagement strategy. Organizations often invest extensive resources to produce complex informatics only to fall flat upon the implementation phase.

MedEngage is a physician engagement assessment and training program offered by FMA, a leader in clinical variation analytics. FMA first assesses its client's current physician engagement program and then develops a customized training program that addresses the client's particular needs.

A typical program might include the following:

Phase I: Current Physician Engagement Program Assessment

Interviews

An FMA Medical Director conducts interviews with key members of the client's physician engagement team. Those interviewed often include Medical Directors, Outreach Staff, Analysts and IT Staff.

Interview topics may include:

- The current status of the client's physician engagement efforts
- How the client's physician engagement team is currently engaging physicians
- Who designates the physician engagement teams
- Current physician engagement training programs
- Recent successes
- Negative experiences

Practitioner Focus Groups

Focus groups are conducted with practitioners within the client's network. Ideally, the focus groups will include physician groups who have recently been involved with current physician engagement programs.

Phase II: Program Development

FMA works with the client's leadership to develop a customized and targeted physician engagement training program. The elements of the program will be based on the client's goals and information gathered during the interview process and focus groups.

Potential areas of focus include:

- The 10 steps of effective physician engagement
- Engaging physicians successfully - "Getting to Yes"
- Building an effective team
- Selecting the right measures
- Creating effective practitioner reports
- Creating meaningful projects
- Planning for meetings with practitioners
- Identifying interventions
- Motivating behavioral change

Phase III: Program Implementation

First Training Session

In most cases, a full day of training will take place at the client's location. Based on the results of the interviews and focus groups, FMA staff may hold a combination of individual meetings with the client's leadership team, smaller breakout sessions or a single session with all engagement staff in attendance. Engagement teams will be asked to reach out to at least one physician group in preparation for the next training session.

Second Training Session

Approximately 30-60 days after the first training session, the groups will meet again to discuss successes and challenges experienced during recent physician engagements assigned to outreach staff. In this session, FMA training staff may facilitate vignettes or reenactments in order to illustrate how to overcome common obstacles encountered during physician engagement.

Assessment Session

The main purpose of the final session is to evaluate the post-training status of the client's physician engagement program. FMA staff and client leadership will decide if further training is required. This session usually occurs 90 days from the second training session.

Ongoing Coaching

FMA's physician engagement team is available for ongoing coaching beyond the three session training program.

MedEngage—Proven Principles and Philosophies

FMA Medical Director Howard Beckman, MD, FACP drew from his vast experience in creating the curriculum for MedEngage. Dr. Beckman is a national thought leader on physician-patient and administration-physician relationships. He authored a classic study in 1984 showing that physicians interrupt their patients after only 18 seconds. Since then he has published over 30 papers on creating effective partnerships. Most recently his work has explored the value of relationship-centeredness in administrative roles. As an ethnographer, his work has focused on understanding and teaching the specific skills needed to promote organizational success. He has 16 years of organizational experience as a hospital chief of medicine and as medical director Rochester (NY) Individual Practice Association.

Dr. Beckman directs each MedEngage program and participates in all phases of each engagement.

