Role of the Trauma Medical Director

Matthew L Davis, MD FACS
Texas A&M University/Scott & White Hospital
you think YOU have stress?
Objectives

- Define TMD opportunities
- Leadership
- Assessment of the current state
- Preparing for the future
Why TQIP?

- Surgery (specifically, trauma) has always led in quality improvement, development of improved processes, better outcomes.
- We think we do things pretty well…but, do we?
- Quality is the future.
- Future verification of trauma centers likely to have some outcomes component involved in the process.
- Opportunity to lead from the front
- Improvement of regional and national trauma systems.
- Better care for the individual trauma patient.
Opportunities

- Honest, critical self-evaluation
- “Every problem is a treasure”
- Engage others in the PI process
- Put action where talk is
- Communicable way to demonstrate quality metrics to hospital administration
- Opportunities to review entire processes of care
- Set the tone for the trauma center
Leadership

“When leaders talk of the experience of leadership they talk more about the role of that person, far more about duties and responsibilities than about the maelstrom of feelings, fantasies, ambitions, conflicts, guilt and joys that are always in the picture . . . they give us a job description and not a personal experience.” Sarason, The Creation and Settings of Future Societies, 1972

In the early 20th century, leaders focused on maximizing use of employees hands. In the latter half of that century, attention was turned to making full use of their employee’s minds. In the 21st century great companies will figure out how to tap into people’s hearts - their passions and desires to make a difference through work. Bill George, Authentic Leadership
Leadership

Transactional vs Transformational leadership styles

- Transactional leaders are more traditional and focus on goals and objectives – holding followers responsible for product.
- Transformational leaders use relational methods to build new things. Motivate followers by engaging them in the process of work. “Performance beyond expectations.”

- What style is needed to improve processes and outcomes?
- Are they mutually exclusive?
“The actions of leaders inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more” - John Quincy Adams
Key TMD Qualities

- Approachability
- Passion and Commitment
- Able advocate for change
- Lead by example – “in the trenches”
- Reflective and self-critical
- Positive yet critical feedback
- Networking skills
- Empower staff to improve and achieve
Key TMD Actions

❖ Be the link between clinical work and the data
  ❖ Your registrar is a daily partner, not someone you work with every 3 years.
  ❖ Accessibility Accessibility Accessibility.
  ❖ Clinical documentation is paramount.
    ❖ Coding
    ❖ Injury grading
    ❖ ISS/AIS
    ❖ Physician buy-in
❖ Complications
  ❖ What criteria are you using?
What method does your center use to diagnose complications?

A) Clinical documentation of a diagnosis
B) NSQIP guidelines
C) Local/State Guidelines
D) NTDB Guidelines
Key TMD Actions

❖ Be the link between clinical work and the data
❖ Your registrar is a daily partner, not someone you work with every 3 years.
❖ Accessibility Accessibility Accessibility Accessibility.
❖ Clinical documentation is paramount.
   ❖ Coding
   ❖ Injury grading
   ❖ ISS/AIS
   ❖ Physician buy-in
❖ Complications
   ❖ What criteria are you using?
❖ Loop closure
   ❖ What is it?
   ❖ Have we achieved it?
The Current State

- The results are only as good as the data
  - Assess your documentation, registry practice, audits, etc.

- In interpreting TQIP data, surround yourself with individuals that have different areas of expertise.
  - Don’t use people who will just tell you what you want to hear.

- Areas of success –
  - Are we doing things differently than other centers?
  - Is there something we can share to help others?
  - How do we ensure ongoing success?
The Current State

- Areas of poor performance –
  - How good is our data?
  - Use your registry!
  - Understand all of the processes that affect the outcomes in the area you are evaluating
  - Put everything on the table – personnel, structure, equipment, process

- Take results to higher QI/PI committees in the hospital.

- Be accountable to yourself, your team, your administration and, ultimately, your patients.
Preparing For the Future

- Create an expectation of excellence.
- Grab any low-hanging fruit.
- Create realistic goals with timelines.
- Engage individuals throughout the entire process of care.
- Don’t just look at results, quantify the processes that lead to those results and understand them, so you can share lessons learned.
- Don’t continue legacy methods if they are flawed.
- Emphasize improving processes, outcomes and numbers will change as a consequence.
Organizational Culture

- The collective behavior of humans that are part of an organization, it is also formed by the organization values, visions, norms, working language, systems, and symbols, it includes beliefs and habits. It is also the pattern of such collective behaviors and assumptions that are taught to new organizational members as a way of perceiving, and even thinking and feeling.

- It is not well studied in the setting of trauma
How much effect does trauma center culture have on outcomes?

- A) No effect
- B) Minimal effect
- C) Some effect, but not as much as proper structure and process
- D) Large effect
Organizational Culture

• We often focus on the 3 components of quality – structure, process and outcomes.

• It is often noted that two medical centers may have similar/identical structure and process. However, their outcomes are very different. Why is that?

• Is culture the 4th component?

• Is everyone at the trauma center dedicated to the care of the trauma patient. Do they feel part of a team and that their contributions matter?

• What is the tone set by the Trauma Medical Director?
Organizational Culture

Does a healthy organizational culture at your trauma center improve structure, process and outcomes?

Healthy organizational cultures are characterized by:

- Acceptance and appreciation for diversity
- Regard for and fair treatment of each employee as well as respect for each employee’s contribution to the company
- Employee pride and enthusiasm for the organization and the work performed
- Equal opportunity for each employee to realize their full potential within the company
- Strong communication with all employees regarding policies and company issues
- Strong company leaders with a strong sense of direction and purpose
- Ability to compete in industry innovation and customer service, as well as price
- Lower than average turnover rates
- Investment in learning, training, and employee knowledge
Ongoing Study

- **Hypothesis** – Trauma centers with healthy organizational culture will have advanced structure, better processes of care and superior outcomes.

- **Participants** – all trauma centers enrolled in TQIP

- **Method** – a link to an internet version of a survey (designed for this study and validated by qualitative data as well as expert opinion) will be sent to the TMD of each center. The survey should be sent liberally to the following:
  - Trauma program manager
  - Registrars
  - Trauma nursing and PI coordinators
  - ICU nurses that care for trauma patients
  - ED nurses
  - OR nurses
  - Trauma surgeons
  - ED physicians
Ongoing Study

- The survey is designed to assess culture of a trauma center based on characteristics of healthy organizations.

- We will then examine those results with some of our TQIP outcomes data and determine if a relationship exists between healthy culture and good outcomes.

- All data regarding outcomes and results of the survey will be kept strictly confidential.

- If hypothesis is valid, the next steps would be to look at methods of changing organizational culture and to determine if improving culture can improve outcomes - all other things being equal.
Continuous Journey

“Restlessness is discontent and discontent is the first necessity of progress. Show me a thoroughly satisfied man and I will show you a failure.”

- Thomas A. Edison