

NEWS RELEASE

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New Certificate Program Launched for High-Level Health Care Executives

Working Professionals Learn to Lead in Sprawling Health Care Industry

(Portland, Ore.) December 3, 2007 – The Professional Development Center at Portland State is launching a new program that teaches professionals already in the health care industry how to better navigate complex policy and meet rising goals. The program aims to develop leadership skills at every rung of the health care ladder, including establishing discipline and efficiency, and increase overall patient value.

The brand new Health Care Management Leadership Certificate for high-level executives offered the first courses in January 2008, focused on healthcare management ethics, and strategic planning and action. The new certificate responds to the country's changing health care system, including serving the uninsured and undiagnosed.

"They are drowning," says Roy Magnusson, chief medical officer of the Oregon Health & Science University's Hospitals and Clinics, regarding the daily work of mid-level managers in health care.

Portland State now offers two Health Care Management certificates through the Professional Development Center: the new Leadership Certificate and the Healthcare Management Certificate successfully launched in 2007. The program is a peer-to-peer and student-to-instructor learning environment, where participants draw knowledge from both practicing instructors and fellow professionals.

Enrollment in the Management Certificate series' second year has doubled, and student professionals are traveling from around the Pacific Northwest to advance both their knowledge and working skill sets.

"Ultimately, the series are about better care for the patient and a more productive and empowering experience for the health care professional," says Lori Silverman, program manager at the Professional Development Center.

Brenda Bruns, the chief medical officer at Health Net Health Plan of Oregon and a faculty member at Portland State University, agrees. "We need to apply quality standards from other industries to health care," she says. "Toyota, for example, empowered each person on the line to stop the process if there was a quality problem."

Tracy Gratto, the director of the Coalition of Community Health Clinics and a proponent of Portland State's new programs, suggests that agencies serving patients outside the system will benefit in the long run as well. "Demand far outstrips the capacity in terms of clinic services, and we're treating a pretty unique population which is only getting tougher to serve, so people have to get very creative," Gratto says. "We see training and continuing education as sustainability for the safety-net clinics."

Students in the current program focus on topics such as the cause-and-effect connections between quality and efficiency, figuring out the management and leadership matrix, and rising issues of culturally competent, patient-centered care. Leading industry practitioners serve as instructors, including James Mason, director of the Oregon Department of Health's Office of Multicultural Health, and Steve Dantena, president and chief medical officer at Lifecom.

"I'm learning what I need to know about the field of health care and where it's going, to be more effective managing my clinic," says Angie Hurley, who leads five separate clinics within Outside-In, an agency focusing on homeless youth. "Courses like this are going to grow all over the place, and this one leads the pack because it is exceptional. The caliber of instructors is unequaled, and the level of students is also exceptional and diverse from within the health care profession."

Hurley, a safety net clinic manager, is joined in the inaugural graduating class by 14 other students, including doctors, department managers, hospital directors, and physician-partners.

Students in the health care program are able to transfer course credits toward either a master of public administration: health advising, or a master of public health: management and policy. Portland State and OHSU are the only two Oregon institutions offering advanced certificates in health care management.

For more information on the ceremony new certificate program, contact program manager Lori Silverman at 503-725-5848 or llsilver@pdx.edu.

The Professional Development Center (PDC) is under the School of Extended Studies at Portland State University. Other PDC programs include Multimedia Professional, Project Management, Organization Development, Human Resource Management, Informational Technology, Accelerated Supervision and Current Topics and Contemporary Issues.