

MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL COHESION

Background

Public organizations are increasingly challenged on their ability to work across organizational borders. This is especially the case in the health sector where the quality of treatments and patient care are highly dependent on collaboration between organizational units. The project focuses on reinforcing interdisciplinary collaboration and is conducted in a partnership between the Center and Central Denmark Region.

The many specialized organizational units in health services are mutually dependent on each other. Managers in the individual organizational units are responsible for ensuring high quality services within their own units, but since the quality of patient care depends on all involved units, it is a managerial challenge to secure organizational cohesion in the execution of tasks across all units involved in the care of individual patients.

It is well known that management and coordination across organizational units require a systematic, conscious and persistent management approach. It is therefore important that managers in the health sector make an effort to develop their managerial attention to interdisciplinary tasks, designate shared objectives and build competences to work and structure collaboration across organizational boundaries to solve the common tasks in respect of mutual dependencies.

Objective and research method

The objective of the project is to develop and document the effect of training that strengthens managers' competences to handle the challenges they face when they have to manage across professional groups, wards, hospitals and municipalities.



Via a lottery-based, delayed intervention study, the project will test and document the effects of systematic leadership training of heads of healthcare departments (managers of managers).

The training focuses on leadership across different boundaries and improved organizational cohesion. 34 pairs of managers will be randomly selected to receive leadership training in 2019 (intervention group) or in 2020 (control group).

The ambition is to improve organizational cohesion to ensure effective use of resources, frictionless collaboration, and cohesive patient care. The training is intended to increase the participants' competences in managing interdisciplinary tasks and nudge their leadership behavior in that direction. Moreover, the managers' actions should ideally rub off on the functional managers' and the employees' orientation towards and perception of organizational cohesion between the respective units.

A final objective is to generate solid knowledge about effective leadership training in terms of creating organizational cohesion that can be propagated and to develop leadership training nationally and potentially internationally.

Additional information

The project is headed by Vice Center Director Christian Bøtcher Jacobsen and Head of Department Karen Ingerslev and is supported by Professor Mickael Bech and Project Manager Susanne Østergaard. Initial results will be presented in September 2019.