

Emotional Intelligence in Healthcare Leadership

Syed Faraz ul Hassan Shah Gillani¹, Masood Jawaid^{2,3,4}

¹Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Mayo Hospital, Lahore, ²PharmEvo (Pvt) Limited, ³Jinnah Sindh Medical University, Karachi, ⁴University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan.

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.36283/PJMD11-4/001>

¹ORCID iD: 0000-0001-9128-7163

^{2,3,4}ORCID iD: 0000-0002-4687-0867

How to cite: Gillani SFHS, Jawaid M. Emotional Intelligence in Healthcare Leadership. Pak J Med Dent. 2022;11(4): 1-2. doi: 10.36283/PJMD11-4/001

Effective leadership is important in team management and the delivery of services in healthcare. Healthcare services work in a team that requires inter-team, intra-team, inter-department and effective communication with the hospital administration¹. It requires leadership with healthcare providers like paramedics and allied health workers. Different teams have conflicts and require motivation for better service delivery. The gap is evident in healthcare leadership in Pakistan. We do not have formal teaching and training in healthcare in emotional intelligence (EI). EI helps a leader understand, engage, and motivate a team. A leader's EI skills have an important role in setting organizational culture. In the year 2022, this gap exists in health care regulations and accreditation bodies².

According to Daniel Goleman, "all effective leaders are blended under the umbrella of the high level of development of EI". Psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer stated that EI is a section of social intelligence, and they defined EI as the ability to perceive and express emotions, assimilate emotions and thoughts, understand and explain emotions, and regulate emotions (one's own and those of other people). In healthcare, it starts with patient family-centered care (bedside manners), effective communication, problem-solving skill and the ability to do multitask. It has intrapersonal skills such as self-awareness (identifying and understanding own emotions), and self-management (using emotions to facilitate thoughts and manage emotions). They are also called personal competence. Interpersonal skills include social awareness (identifying and understanding others' emotions) and relationship management (using and managing other emotions). They can also be called social competence³.

In interpersonal self-awareness of own emotions, their appropriate interpretation or appraisal and self-assessment are needed. In emotional awareness of intrapersonal skill, one needs to recognize the feeling in some proximity, the ability to note body signs and identify the behavior that may indicate your feelings. It is not a behavior of a person but the appraisal of emotions is the main reason for the reaction. One must be able to understand the inner dialogue before any action or reaction. Self-assessment implies awareness about own strengths and weaknesses, good learning from experience, openness to feedback, and others' ideas, and showing a sense of humor about self. The interpersonal skill of self-management involves emotional composure (self-control, productive self-talk and conditional relaxation), adaptability (flexibility, openness to change and managing multiple demands), motivation (confidence, optimism, enthusiasm and resilience) and personal integrity explaining understanding and alignment between values and behavior. Social awareness is about empathy (staying sensitive and attend other needs and feelings), social integrity (Conscientiously meeting your commitments, being accountable to others, demonstrating honesty with others and leading to trust) and awareness of other emotions. Relationship management in interpersonal skills requires communication, rapport, conflict management and leadership⁴.

Communication is about actively listening to others, showing assertiveness, keeping positive body language and giving the right feedback. A good leader listens to understand, focuses on content and maintains emotional subtext while listening. Assertiveness is about clearly identifying and communicating intentions and requests. The body language depicts a person positioning, facial expression and voice tone. Feedback is important to maintain confidence and improve a person's competencies. Rapport is about reciprocity, and building relationships based on similarities and differences. It is about connecting effectively with others and leading with trust.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY) 4.0
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Conflict management is a basic block of leadership that requires good EI. It is about identifying potential conflicts, knowing your conflict management style moving beyond positions to interests encouraging debate and looking for win-win solutions. There are different conflict management styles including competition, avoidance, accommodation, compromise and collaboration. Also, there are different leadership styles including authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter and coaching leadership styles. A leader must understand their leadership style and improve their EI to work as an effective leader to contribute to healthcare. A doctor works as a clinician with additional responsibility as a leader. He delivers at personal, community and social levels for which good EI is important. EI is not an innate skill. It requires proper training to improve mental wellbeing, quality of social life and workplace performance. Ingraining this skill at the undergraduate level is essential for effective personal (empathy and compassion) and professional life (clinical outcome)⁵. We need to understand our problems of leadership in health care. This problem can be better solved by adding a module on EI and leadership in the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. The teaching and training of future doctors can help us effectively remove barriers. Additionally, training courses on the national issues of EI and leadership can help us fill this gap.

REFERENCES

1. Babiker A, El Hussein M, Al Nemri A, Al Frayh A, Al Juryyan N, Faki MO, *et al.* Health care professional development: Working as a team to improve patient care. *Sudan J Paediatr.* 2014; 14(2): 9-16.
2. Nawaz ZA, Khan_PhD I. The challenges concerning the healthcare leadership towards innovation in developing countries like Pakistan. *Adv Life Sci Technol.* 2016;40:1-4.
3. Goleman D, Boyatzis R, McKee A. Emotional leadership: Emotions as a factor in corporate success. *Harvard Business Review: 10 Top Articles.* Moscow: Alpina Digital; 2015.
4. Mayer JD, Salovey P. Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Implications for educators Eds. New York, NY: BasicBooks (1995). p. 6.
5. Carsen S, Xia C. The physician as leader. *McGill J Med.* 2006; 9(1): 1-2.

