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### **MEDICAL SCIENCES**

# LEADERSHIP STYLES IN THE MEDICAL INDUSTRY: CHARACTERISTICS, ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES

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#### **Abstract**

The article examines the main leadership styles in the medical industry, their characteristics, advantages and limitations. The features of the use of authoritarian, democratic, liberal, transformational and transactional styles in different types of medical institutions are analyzed. Recommendations are given for the adaptive use of leadership styles, taking into account the specifics of the medical environment and the needs of personnel [1,2]. The research materials are based on the analysis of modern scientific literature, content analysis of publications and regulatory documents. The results are aimed at improving the efficiency of management in healthcare.

**Keywords:** leadership, medical management, transformational leadership, management style, healthcare.

The medical industry is one of the most complex areas of activity, where effective leadership has a direct impact not only on organizational efficiency, but also on the quality of medical care, patient safety, and staff satisfaction. In the context of rapid changes in the healthcare system, the introduction of digital technologies, demographic shifts, and the growth of professional burnout among medical professionals, the issue of management becomes key [3].

The **purpose of this article** is to analyze the main leadership styles used in medical institutions, assess their advantages, disadvantages, and feasibility of application in different organizational conditions.

Material and methods. The work used the following methods: comparative analysis - to compare the advantages and disadvantages of different leadership styles; analytical review of scientific literature - to systematize theoretical approaches to leadership in medical organizations; content analysis of publications and regulatory documents of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and international health organizations (WHO, NHS); qualitative analysis - to assess the application of individual styles depending on the type of medical institution.

**Results.** In management theory, there are a number of classifications of leadership styles that were formed during the 20th and 21st centuries. One of the first were the classical styles: authoritarian, democratic and liberal, described in the works of Kurt Lewin and his followers [4]. With the development of organizational psychology and management, more flexible and complex approaches appeared, such as transformational and transactional leadership, as well as the concepts of situational and service leadership.

In the modern context, especially in medical institutions, the leadership style is not stable and must adapt to the environmental conditions, the composition of the team and the specifics of the services provided [5].

#### Characteristics of the main leadership styles:

1. **Authoritarian style.** The authoritarian leadership style involves centralized decision-making,

a rigid vertical of subordination, strict adherence to instructions and restrictions on initiative by subordinates. In the medical field, it has traditionally been used in inpatient settings, especially in hospitals with a military or crisis profile.

Advantages: high speed of decision-making; clarity of the command structure; effectiveness in emergency situations (epidemics, disasters).

*Disadvantages:* lack of flexibility; reduced staff motivation; lack of feedback and collective discussion of problems.

2. **Democratic style.** The democratic style of management is based on staff participation in decision-making, open communication and collegiality. In medical teams, it stimulates professional growth, trust and teamwork.

Advantages: increased level of employee involvement; support for creative initiatives; improvement of the psychological climate in the team.

*Disadvantages:* slower response to changes; need for a higher level of staff maturity; possible conflicts in the absence of consensus.

3. **Liberal style.** Liberal management involves minimal intervention by the manager in the processes. Employees have a high degree of autonomy in decision-making.

Advantages: promotes freedom of action and creativity; develops responsibility in staff; useful in highly professional teams (for example, in scientific and research medical institutions).

*Disadvantages*: loss of managerial control; risk of anarchy in the team; lack of clear guidelines for new employees.

4. **Transformational leadership.** This style is based on the leader's ability to inspire, create a vision of development, and support innovation. In the medical industry, transformational leaders often initiate the reform of medical services, the introduction of new technologies, and a change in the culture of interaction with patients.

Advantages: strong motivation of employees; adaptability to change; high level of trust in the team.

*Disadvantages:* requires great energy and charisma from the leader; may not work in a highly regulated environment; high risk of professional burnout for the leader.

5. **Transactional leadership.** This style involves a clear system of rewards and sanctions. Subordinates perform tasks according to instructions, and the leader supervises the results.

Advantages: high structure of processes; transparency of expectations; efficiency in routine administrative tasks.

*Disadvantages:* limited space for innovation; weak impact on personnel development; does not contribute to the formation of emotional connection in the team.

Features of the application of styles in the medical field. The medical industry is characterized by a complex organizational structure, a high level of responsibility, and the need to make decisions under conditions of uncertainty. Therefore, the leadership style should be selected not only taking into account the personal characteristics of the manager, but also the specifics of the institution itself, the level of staff autonomy, the cultural context, and the nature of the tasks.

The impact of the type of healthcare institution. Public hospitals often have an authoritarian or transactional style, especially in the context of regulated standards, limited resources, and strict accountability. In such conditions, it is important to maintain discipline and effectively distribute tasks, which can complicate the application of more flexible or innovative models.

Private clinics, on the other hand, more often prefer a democratic or transformational style, focusing on service quality, patient engagement, and staff development. Such organizations have a higher level of flexibility and autonomy, which contributes to effective team management.

In academic medical institutions or research institutes, a combination of a liberal style (to encourage scientific initiative) with elements of transformational leadership is often observed, especially in project management or during educational process reform.

The role of organizational culture and professional environment. Healthcare professionals are typically highly trained and have autonomy in clinical decision-making, but they also work in a team environment. This requires a balance between control and trust from the leader. A style based solely on top-down management can lead to resistance or passivity.

Organizational culture also plays a role – transformational leadership is easier to implement in open, innovative environments, while in conservative structures, gradual changes through a transactional approach work better.

Hybrid models as the optimal approach. Modern research shows that the most effective are hybrid

leadership models, where the leader adapts his style depending on the situation, tasks, the level of team maturity and external challenges. For example, in emergency situations it may be advisable to switch to an authoritarian style, while in the development planning phase it is advisable to use a democratic or transformational approach.

#### Conclusions.

- 1. Management in the medical industry requires not only administrative skills, but also a deep understanding of human relationships, the psychoemotional state of the staff and the dynamics of teamwork.
- 2. It has been analyzed that different leadership styles have their advantages and limitations, which manifest themselves differently depending on the type of institution, situation and organizational culture.

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