

# Medical Group Administration

## MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MEDICAL GROUP ADMINISTRATION

Prerequisites for all courses: Acceptance to the MS in Medical Group Administration Program or by department approval.

### **MGA 501 BUSINESS AND CLINICAL OPERATIONS**

Credit Hours: 3

Operating a medical group practice is not like managing a hospital, nursing home, or retail store. It requires a special set of technical and professional knowledge and skills. The diversity and variety of situations that occur in a medical practice make its managers a unique breed. The medical practice executive must have both a general knowledge of many areas as well as a specific capacity to handle detailed information in many areas. Numerous internal and external pressures effect the operational side of practice management, including regulatory changes, third party payer demands and expectations, patient demands and expectations, staff and physician expectations, and declining reimbursement for services. Successful business and clinical operations management requires a broad range of experience and expertise.

### **MGA 505 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

Today's medical group practices are continually faced with change – change in reimbursement; change in financial and organizational oversight; change in leadership; and change in policies, regulations, and standards; as well as change in the health care needs and wants of the populations served. To survive in this turbulent environment in health care, medical practice executives must be adaptable. Strategic planning allows the practice to change direction in a quick and coordinated fashion. Strategic planning provides powerful tools that can help medical group practices achieve goals and objectives on a continuous basis, especially as they relate to a rapidly changing, dynamic environment. Successful medical practice executives understand the value of embracing strategic planning and marketing, rather than merely reacting to their environments.

### **MGA 512 FUNDMENTALS OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

Accounting, budgeting, and benchmarking are central to business decisions. Medical practices use accounting to record, monitor, and report their financial condition. Practices use budgets to translate what they decide into

what they expect to spend and earn. Benchmarks regarding the financial performance of a practice can assist management with complex business decisions. A group practice executive can utilize a wide range of financial benchmarks, including revenue, productivity, accounts receivable, expenses, profitability, and liquidity. By using analytical financial procedures to locate areas of potential financial improvement and opportunity, a practice executive can lead their practice to better financial performance.

### **MGA 515 CHANGE MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

This course focuses on effectively managing change at an organizational level. Students examine and develop strategies to facilitate change as a positive and dynamic force. Specific areas include effective communication and communication tools, transition planning, understanding the dynamics of group culture and organizational behavior, supportive cultural environments and understanding the human element of change, including resistance to and acceptance of change. With change, conflict occurs. Conflict management is a skill that is integral to the success of any organization. Learning skills for early identification and management of these potentially volatile situations is necessary to be an effective manager. Specific areas addressed include: using negotiation skills to reach consensus on critical issues while maintaining trust relationships with key constituents; resolving conflicts in ways that create energy and motivation for appropriate change; building trust and relationships to motivate individuals and groups to become effective teams; and fostering participation in self-assessment and continuous learning programs.

### **MGA 522 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

Planning for, selecting, and managing information resources for a medical practice constitute a challenging, dynamic responsibility, albeit one that is critical to the organizations' success. The knowledge base changes continually and relatively rapidly. Decisions about information products cannot be made in isolation, as interoperability of information technology is required to support seamless health care for individuals. No other domain of the medical practice executive's knowledge is constrained with the degree of regulation and external oversight that is present in health information management. The stakes are high, as an individual's right to privacy and the assurance of information security are at risk. The accountability for managing and protecting sensitive information falls to the practice manager. The savvy medical practice executive will identify reliable sources of information and good advisors with experience in information

management. Both types of resources can provide guidance in balancing the need for access to information for business and patient care needs with the need to protect the security and confidentiality of that same information.

**MGA 525 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

Creating an efficient human resources function is one of the most important activities in a medical practice. The organization has to care for its staff and attract and retain the best employees. The human resources function of managing employees and addressing their needs and wants is a constant challenge. A well-run medical practice with a strong vision, mission, goals, and objectives will use its human resource function to develop, implement, and maintain excellent programs in salary and wage administration, benefits administration, procedures and policies, recruitment, appraisal and evaluation, employee relations, training and development, and reward and recognition. The key to that success will be grounded in excellent service and quality patient care.

**MGA 532 RISK MANAGEMENT AND CLINICAL QUALITY**

Credit Hours: 3

Risk management is a comprehensive set of management skills that covers the entire spectrum of activity in the practice. It is not a function; rather, it is a management skill and process that, if used correctly, can identify areas of potential loss long before they emerge. Risk management draws on federal and state legislation and regulation as well as principles of safety, science, communication, human interaction, and business practices. It creates a network of measurements against which the daily operation of the medical practice can benchmark itself to find the means to reduce injury to patients and employees and to minimize financial loss to the organization. Additionally, the development and maintenance of a culture of quality in clinical care provision is imperative.

**MGA 535 ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

Ethical expectations for leaders include respecting rights of others, honesty in all interactions, and decision-making practices that are based on legal principles and that maintain confidentiality, impartiality, and sensitivity to diversity. This course develops skills in these areas through analysis and application of theories and best practices. In addition, effective ethical leadership requires conflict management skills. Specific areas addressed include: using negotiation skills to reach consensus on critical issues while maintaining trust

relationships with key constituents; resolving conflicts in ways that create energy and motivation for appropriate change; and building trust and relationships to motivate individuals and groups to become effective teams.

**MGA 538 REVENUE CYCLE AND BILLING MANAGEMENT**

Credit Hours: 3

When a physician provides medical services to a patient, a complex multi-step process is initiated to ensure the physician is paid for the services rendered. Professional fee billing is the process that translates a physician medical service into a bill that the patient or a third party payer will pay. Strong financial oversight is required to maintain a successful practice. Managers must be keenly aware of accurate coding and billing, days in accounts receivable, and collection percentages. Increased scrutiny from third party payers also forces practice executives to be knowledgeable about continuously updated rules and regulations.

**MGA 542 GOVERNANCE AND PHYSICIAN RELATIONS**

Credit Hours: 3

The governance and organizational dynamics of the medical group require careful attention. Each task is essential to maintaining a functional group and is equally important to creating an environment where change is possible. Modern medical group administration and, to a large degree, medical group governance are about the management of relationships with all of the various stakeholders and constituent groups. These stakeholders include physicians, patients, employees, hospitals, community leaders, payers, and many more. Without a clear structure for governance, and a plan to manage these relationships, the organization simply will not produce the level of performance expected.

**MGA 590 CAPSTONE/SYNTHESIS**

Credit Hours: 3

The Capstone course is designed to synthesize your learning from the MGA program. It will build upon your understanding of the key elements in medical group administration, including business and clinical operations, strategic management, finance, human resources, risk management, organizational behavior, and physician relations. A variety of external readings will be used highlighting particular topics not emphasized in previous courses. At the end of the course, students will be required to complete a significant project that demonstrates their mastery of the ten previous courses' learning objectives.