



Quality
Insights

QIN-QIO

Quality Innovation Network -
Quality Improvement Organizations
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP

Building Bridges

Fostering Engagement Between
Medical Directors and Facility
Staff to Create Optimal Outcomes

Part 1

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Medical Director Quality Insights



Objectives

- This session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and tools needed to leverage the medical director's role, ultimately enhancing patient outcomes. Attendees will learn how to integrate medical director leadership to improve the overall quality of care provided in nursing home facilities.
- Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse responsibilities and roles of a nursing home medical director beyond clinical care, exploring their involvement in policy development, staff education, and quality improvement initiatives.

Objectives, Cont.

- Attendees will learn practical strategies to foster collaborative relationships between medical directors and facility care teams, promoting effective communication and engagement in care policies, educational programs, and quality assurance and performance improvement (QAPI) activities.
- Participants will explore how medical directors can actively contribute to and shape facility care policies, ensuring alignment with regulatory standards and promoting a culture of continuous improvement. This includes insights into successful models with real-life case examples



Do You Know the Duties of Your Medical Director?

- Many medical directors assume that their job consists of taking care of the medical needs of the residents in the facility
- Because it is sometimes difficult for facilities to find a medical director, they do not explain the role and expectations of the MD
- Does your medical director know what their duties are?

So You Want to Be a Medical Director?

Physician

Must have a valid license in the state where the nursing home is located.

Duties

The facility must determine how the medical director will fulfill their responsibilities. The facility is in charge of ensuring that all responsibilities are performed.

Knowledge

The medical director must be knowledgeable about current standards of practice in caring for LTC residents and how to oversee other practitioners.

Job Description

The medical director works closely with the director of nursing and nursing home administrator to help build a foundation to provide the best quality of care in the facility. It is a unique position, because the medical director is not an employee of the facility. This contractual arrangement can either create silos or provide an advantage with a “third party” perspective.

**Physician
Leadership**

**Clinical
Leadership**

**Quality
of Care**

**Education,
Information,
Communication**

42 CFR § 483.70 F-Tag 841

1. Implementation of resident care policies
2. Overall coordination of medical care

Roles

- Recommend, develop, and approve facility policies related to resident care (physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being)
- Organize services provided by other professionals as they relate to resident care
- Participate in Quality Assessment and Assurance (QAA) committee and address coordination of medical care issues identified through the QAA committee

Example: Wine & Cheese Party

The activities director seeks the medical director's approval of a list of residents who would like to have a glass of wine at a wine and cheese party. The medical director helps develop a policy about alcohol consumption at activities.



Example: Medical Records

The director of medical records asks the medical director to speak to attending physician about his charts which have not been signed for 9 months.



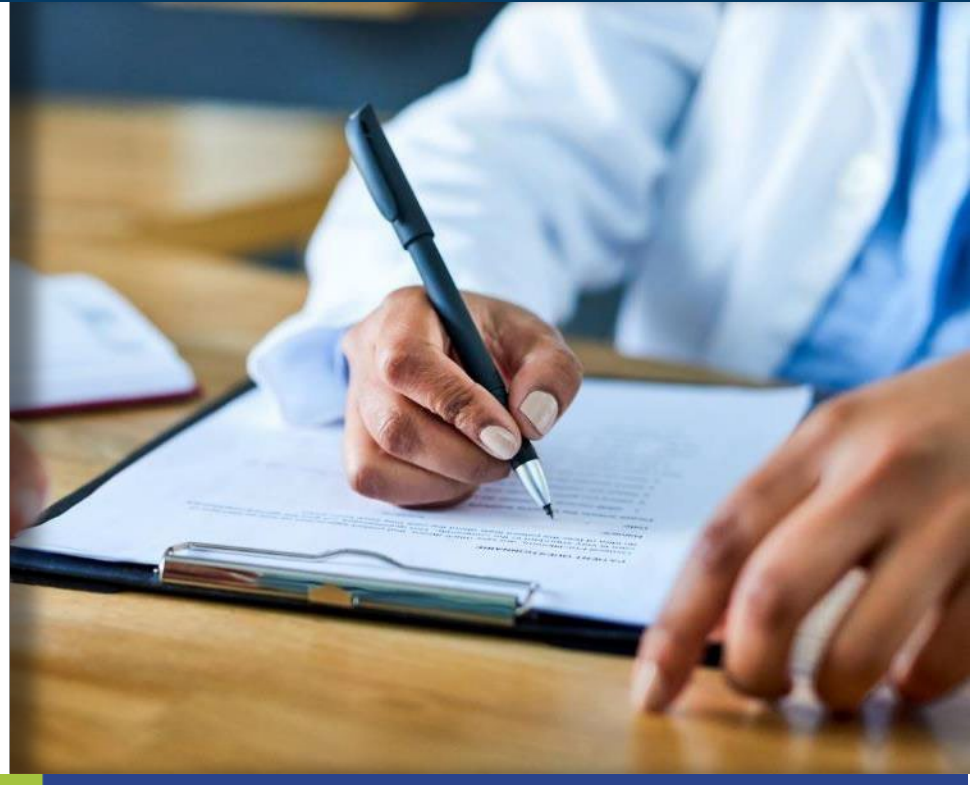
Example: Unsafe Medication Monitoring

The DON asks the medical director to speak to an attending physician who is ordering increasing doses of warfarin and is ordering the INR to be drawn monthly.



Example: High-Risk Medications

The director of nursing asks the medical director to speak to psychiatric nurse practitioner about their prescribing practices due to the high amount of orders for antipsychotics given to residents with advanced dementia.



Additional Roles

- Ensure the appropriateness and quality of medical care
- Assist in the development of educational programs for facility staff
- Work with the clinical team to provide surveillance and develop policies to prevent potential infections (very important)



Nail Care

A new podiatrist starts providing care in the facility and asks the DON to obtain an order from the MD that every resident receive “nail care” from the podiatrist to make the trip to the facility “worth the time.”

Sliding Scale

There are many residents in the facility with orders for sliding scale insulin. The medical director provides an educational session for all staff on appropriate treatment of diabetes in long term care.

Roles...

- Cooperate with facility staff to establish policies for assuring that the rights of individuals (residents, staff members, and community members) are respected
- Support and promote person-directed care such as the formation of advance directives, end-of-life care, and provisions that enhance resident decision-making, including choice regarding medical care options
- Identify performance expectations and facilitating feedback to physicians and other health care practitioners regarding their performance and practices

Examples

Resident Rights

A resident frequently wears bikinis while walking through the halls of the facility. Another resident complains about seeing the resident in bikinis. The MD meets with resident counsel to develop a policy around appropriate dress in the facility.

Capacity

The MD helps develop a policy to ensure medical capacity is assessed and a form is completed indicating this assessment on all new admissions, readmissions, and yearly on all long-term residents.

UTI Treatment

An attending physician initiates antibiotic therapy for treatment of “probable UTI” in any resident who has a urinalysis that “looks positive.” The MD speaks to the physician about appropriate diagnosis of UTI.

And More Roles...

- Discuss and intervene with a health care practitioner regarding medical care that is inconsistent with current standards of care
- Assist in developing systems to monitor the performance of the health care practitioners, including:
 - Mechanisms for communicating and resolving issues related to medical care
 - Ensuring other licensed practitioners (e.g., nurse practitioners) who may perform physician-delegated tasks act within the regulatory requirements and within the scope of practice as defined by state law



Standards of Care

An attending physician refuses to treat residents who test positive for COVID with any therapeutics other than ivermectin. The medical director provides current treatment guidelines for COVID-19 infection to the attending physician.

Regulatory Visits

An attending physician has the nurse practitioner who works for him complete all regulatory visits on long-term residents and every other admission history and physical. The MD explains current regulations to the physician.

Infection Control

What your medical director should be doing:

1. Monitoring all antibiotic use in facility (antibiotic stewardship)
2. Monitoring all outbreaks
3. Ensuring policies are in place regarding appropriate precautions (standard, contact, enhanced barrier precautions)
4. Monitoring all infections (and what bacteria are causing the infections)

More on some infection control QAPI projects in next webinar...

If MD Is Interviewed During Survey

The MD must know:

- Their role in assisting facility staff with resident care policies, medical care, and physician issues
- Their roles, responsibilities and functions and the extent to which they receive support from facility management for these roles and functions
- The process for providing feedback to physicians and other healthcare practitioners regarding their performance and practices, including discussing and intervening (as appropriate) with a healthcare practitioner regarding medical care that is inconsistent with current professional standards of care

The MD Must Understand:

- Their input into the facility's scope of services, including the capacity to care for residents with complex or special care needs, such as:
 - Dialysis
 - Hospice or end-of-life care
 - Respiratory support with ventilators
 - Intravenous medications/fluids
 - Dementia and/or related conditions
 - Problematic behaviors or complex mood disorders
- Their participation or involvement in the Facility Assessment and QAA Committee

MD Roles During Survey



Support

Communicate with the MD that you would like their input for survey. Alert the MD when surveyors arrive.



Communication

If surveyors have a clinical question, reach out to your MD for support if needed. Ask the MD to speak with surveyors.



Presence

Invite the MD to be present during the survey process, especially the exit interview.



Education

Ensure the MD understands their duties. Consider creating a checklist of roles. Explain what is important to the facility.



QAPI

Create an environment of QI where MD provides feedback and participates. MD should be encouraged to share these projects with surveyors.

My Experience With Survey

- Explained my direct observation of a wound and how nursing and I communicated about the wound
- Explained the gradual dose reduction (GDR) process for antipsychotics in a facility
- Explained the process of completing physician orders for life sustaining treatment (POLST) forms in a facility
- Explained a QAPI project for opioid management

Twelve Steps to MD Engagement

- 1. Clear Communication and Education:** Ensure that medical directors fully understand the purpose, goals, and benefits of the quality improvement initiatives. Present the initiatives in a clear and concise manner.
- 2. Data-Driven Approach:** Provide medical directors with relevant data and metrics that highlight areas for improvement. Presenting concrete evidence of current challenges and potential improvements can help them see the value of their involvement and make informed decisions.
- 3. Collaboration and Involvement:** Involve medical directors in the planning and decision-making process. Seek their input on identifying priorities and designing interventions. Their involvement from the outset can create a sense of ownership and commitment.
- 4. Alignment with Regulatory Requirements:** Highlight how the initiatives align with regulatory requirements and industry standards. Medical directors play a crucial role in ensuring compliance with medical and clinical standards, making their involvement essential for meeting regulatory obligations.

Twelve Steps to MD Engagement

- 5. Showcase Best Practices:** Share success stories from other nursing homes or healthcare settings that have implemented similar quality improvement initiatives. Demonstrating positive outcomes achieved elsewhere can motivate medical directors to support the initiatives.
- 6. Regular Updates and Progress Reports:** Provide consistent updates on the progress of the initiatives.
- 7. Respect Their Expertise:** Recognize and respect the medical directors' expertise and clinical knowledge. Acknowledge their role in shaping and guiding medical care within the nursing home.
- 8. Flexible Participation Options:** Recognize that medical directors may have busy schedules. Offer flexible participation options, such as attending meetings in person or virtually, reviewing progress reports, or contributing their insights and recommendations when feasible.

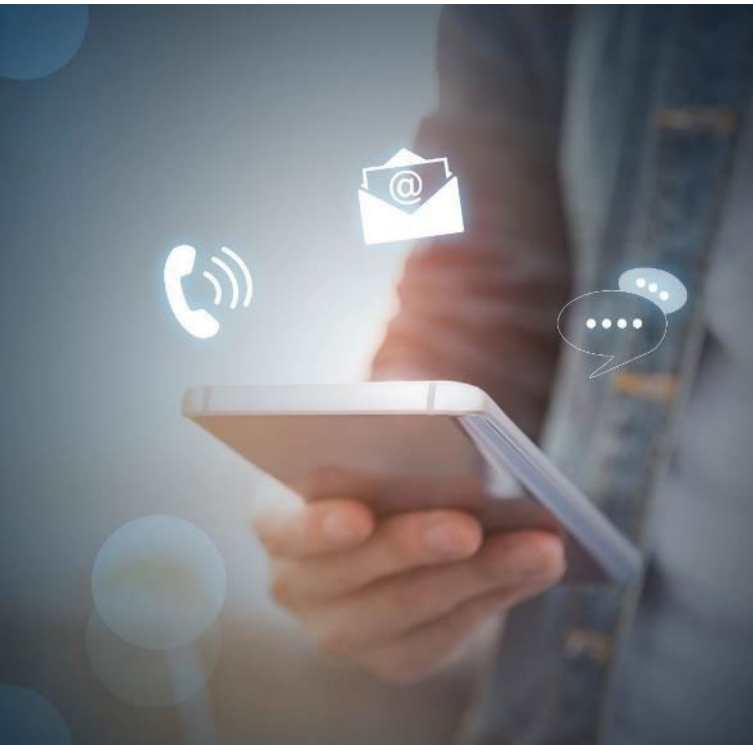
Twelve Steps to MD Engagement

9. **Provide Resources:** Ensure that medical directors have access to the necessary resources, including staff support, tools, and training, to effectively engage in quality improvement initiatives.
10. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish channels for medical directors to provide feedback, express concerns, and suggest modifications to the initiatives. Incorporating their input can lead to more successful and sustainable improvements.
11. **Recognition and Appreciation:** Recognize and appreciate the contributions of medical directors to quality improvement initiatives. Publicly acknowledge their efforts and the positive changes they've helped bring about.
12. **Demonstrate Impact on Patient Care:** Emphasize how the quality improvement initiatives directly impact patient care, safety, and well-being. Use real-life examples to illustrate how changes resulting from their engagement can lead to better patient outcomes.

Questions?



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