



Design of Leadership & Management Training Program for Public Hospital Managers in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

In the past, there has been no leadership and/or management competencies formally integrated in the curricular of clinical pre-service training in Cambodia. The National Institute of Public Health offered a leadership and management training program in 2020 tailored for public health managers. This paper describes the process of how the training program was developed. A technical working group was set up and played a key role in designing the competency-based curriculum. The training required a total of 170 hours to complete, among which 38% for management skills, 32% for leadership, 12% of self-motivation, 11% for team building and 8% for personal development. This design followed the good practices of the leadership training program development and it fits well with the Cambodia health care context.

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Introduction

Cambodia has been continuously working towards improving the quality of its health care services through upgrading infrastructure, logistics and human resources. The goal is to provide high standard care services that are responsive to the need of the population. Continuation of the quality improvement of the services is vital; and health managers are expected to lead their organizations at all level to achieve this goal. Providing leadership and management training to health managers and staff has gained more recognition in improving the performance of the health care institutions [1-3].

In the past, there has been no leadership and/or management competencies formally integrated into the curricular of pre-service training at Medical Universities in Cambodia; consequently, graduates are not well-equipped when they ventured forth to become health managers. Consequently, the quality of health care services is not optimal, and the safety

of patients could be hampered. In response, the National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), a public academic institution, providing laboratory, public health training and health system research started designing a Leadership and Management Program for health facilities managers in 2017 with support from KOICA and US CDC. In 2020, the first cohort of leadership and management training for public hospital managers had been offered to 24 managers from 13 hospitals in 12 cities/provinces.

Many forms of leadership and management training programs have been designed and implemented with various content of core competencies. Common leadership core competencies included strategic thinking, organizational skills, time management, decision-making, leadership skills, conflict resolution, and strategies to enhance performance improvement [4]. Leadership skills are often inter-connected and require a life-long learning. It is challenging to select certain leadership core competencies that fit with the local context and to design a training program to achieve it within limited timeframe and resources.

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A meta-analysis found that the effectiveness of a leadership training program was influenced by its content, attendance policy and the duration of training [5]. However, more assessment is needed to find factors determining the success of any leadership training [6]. Although the effectiveness of the leadership and management is the most sought information, this paper describes the process of developing the curriculum of Leadership and Management training for public hospital managers, offered by NIPH in 2020, in Cambodia.

Methods

Document review was conducted. Main documents reviewed included the training curriculum, communications, and meeting minutes. Authors' knowledge and experience from directly involving in the process of design the training curriculum (Dr. Chhea, Chhorvann) and coordinating the program (Miss. Hong, Kimsear) was also used in this report.

Results

The process of developing the curriculum for the Leadership and Management training for public hospital managers was as follow: forming the technical working group, selecting management and leadership core competencies, designing the curriculum, preparation of the lecturers and final assessment.

1. Formation of the Technical Working Group

The formation of a Technical Working Group (TWG) is one of strategies for improving institutional collaboration. The key role of the TWG is to agree upon the core competencies for the training program. TWG could be served as a platform for generating the political support for the training program. The members of TWG composed of content experts, relevant policy makers, stakeholders and the representatives of intended recipient of the program.

2. Selecting core leadership and management competencies

The process started with brainstorming competencies needed for public hospital managers by TWG members. The Liberating Structures, consist of various tools facilitating in-depth reflection of self, ideas and generate strategies for set a purpose (<https://www.liberatingstructures.com>) had been used to facilitate the group discussions. The discussion on “*The characteristics of an ideal hospital manager?*”

was conducted to generate a list of tasks and/or qualities of hospital managers. Then, the TWG conducted thematic analysis to summarize and grouped those tasks/qualities into management and leadership competencies, followed by the prioritization of core competencies that fitted best in the current hospital management context in Cambodia. As results, the TWG selected 5 themes namely, “Be ready to be a good leader”, “Leadership for Equity”, “Effective organizational management for successful outcomes”, “Creating supportive professional environment” and “Operational management”.

3. Designing the curriculum

The training required 170 hours of face-to-face teaching, among which 38% and 32% were allocated for management and leadership skills, respectively (**Figure 1**). In addition, 8% of the total hours were for personal development which include in-class yoga and meditation sessions would be offered for 30 minutes each day. Team building (11%) and self-motivation (12%) were also the focus of the curriculum.

To fit with the tight schedule of hospital managers, the program was designed in modular combing with in-class teaching and mentoring between modules. Each module required 5 days (6.5 hours/day) of face-to face teaching. In general, one module is offered in every 3 weeks, allowing fellows to have time to sustain their routine work at the hospitals. During in-class teaching, participatory approaches were employed using Liberating Structure. As attendance policy, fellows were required to attend at least 90% of the in-class sessions.

After completing each module, fellows received assignment emphasizing on the application of the concept and skills learnt from the module into daily practices to work on and share with the group in the next module.

Figure 1: Percentage of hours allocated to five main components of the training program

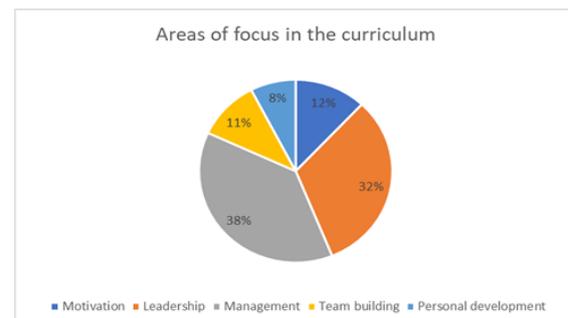


Table 1: Intended learning objectives of the Leadership & Management training for hospital managers

No	Modules/competencies	Intended Learning Objectives
1	Be ready to be a good leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differentiate the concept of management and leadership. - Evolve and apply the whole person leadership. - Assemble qualities and needed skills a responsible health service leader. - Identify core needs as an individual and needs of human capital of the organization. - Establish a new culture of leadership and actions
2	Leadership for equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empower staff to achieve greater success. - Shape effort toward social values of Equity
3	Effective organizational management for successful outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply organizational leadership to improve hospital management. - Use available data and analytical tools to prioritize, refine and solve problems. - Develop a hospital quality management system using Lab Quality Management System as a framework
4	Creating a supportive professional environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the concepts and mechanisms to motivate staff (in hospital) - Identify and apply feasible teamwork mechanism in work environment. - Effectively manage to address conflicts in working environment. - Perform staff performance appraisal. - Effectively improve patient care and facility management through a better nursing care management system, triage, patient flow and improved WASH and IPC (in hospital)
5	Operational management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply public health approach in hospital setting. - Manage hospital within the Cambodia Health System - Set up and apply logistics, budget and finance, human resource management and legal system for hospital

Mentoring would be arranged between modules. The program coordinator created an online group that fellows could connect to lecturers/experts in the fields so that they could ask questions or seek expert's advises while leading their hospitals. In addition, based on the availability of resource, a mentor team would go visiting fellows at their hospitals to encourage and/or provide guidance as needed to help fellows applied leadership and management skills in their setting.

4. Preparation of lecturers

Through TWG, lecturers were invited from different departments of the Ministry of Health, Authorities and other NGOs. Lecturers and mentors were invited based on their expertise and leadership/management experience. Guest speakers were also invited to bring additional perspective and experience to the program. However, to ensure the sustainability of the program, key lecturers were from the host institution, NIPH.

5. Final assessment

Throughout the modules, fellows were required to fully participate in all class activities such as group discussions, presentation field visit and reflection sessions. In addition, at the end of the training program, fellows would provide a final presentation illustrated the application of their leadership skills,

creating working culture that well align with the core value of hospital, setting up vision & strategy and initiating changes to improve their current systems at the health facilities.

Discussion

Leadership and management skills were not included in the curricular of medical trainings at universities in Cambodia. Therefore, NIPH developed this leadership and management training program for health professionals who are currently in management positions at the health facilities. The provision of leadership training at mid-carriers could be a practical solution especially when there is no leadership and management skills offered in pre-service training curricula for medical students. However, it would be more impactful if leadership and management skills are offered at mid-to-late career development in addition to the one offered in pre-service training [7].

In the design stage, the TWG had considered all factors associated with the effectiveness of any training program such as content of the training, attendance, and the duration and based on the concept that medical leaders need to carry both general management and leadership and to balance the management work and physician works [3]. In addition to leadership and management components, the training program allocated 12%, 11% and 8% of the total hours for self-motivation, team building and personal development, respectively, making this

program unique for public hospital managers in Cambodia.

The TWG employed a competency-based approach to develop this curriculum, as it started with identifying core competencies and designing a competency module, then intended learning objectives for each session module. This approach is consistent with that of other leadership and management training for health care setting in other countries [8].

Conclusions

The design of Leadership & Management training program offered by NIPH in 2020 had integrated all key aspects of a successful development of a training program. The curriculum shared 38% and 32% for management and leadership skills, respectively. The inclusion of personal development, self-motivation and team building into the curriculum make this training program unique for public hospital managers in Cambodia.

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