

Faculty Professionalism Concerns: A Framework for Standard Process

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Background

- Unprofessional or disruptive behavior is common in healthcare, with **77%** of respondents in one large survey having witnessed such behavior in physicians.(1)
- Most leaders in healthcare deal with unprofessional faculty behavior at some point but many feel uncomfortable with the process .
- At my institution there are varied approaches to dealing with behavior issues ranging from ignoring to termination.
- To improve physician engagement, we need early, progressive, and educational interventions regarding behavior issues.

Results

- Formalized the Faculty Matters committee and educated about its purpose.
- Implemented a small committee for the intake process.
- Implemented new medical staff policy and manual that clearly outlines progressive steps and templates for all activities.
- Formalized the writing and use of performance improvement plans.
- Realized the need for training for interventions, including use of coaching cohorts.

Discussion

- There was concern that standardization would reduce autonomy of Department Chairs to manage physician behavior.
- Perception that “nothing ever happens” to offending physicians and that the outcome is never known to the reporting individual.
- Leaders are more comfortable with a structured process. Tools to create accountability and graded approach is educational and less punitive.
- Faculty Matters team as a resource is appreciated.
- Many behavior concerns are both professional and clinical.

Purpose / Objectives

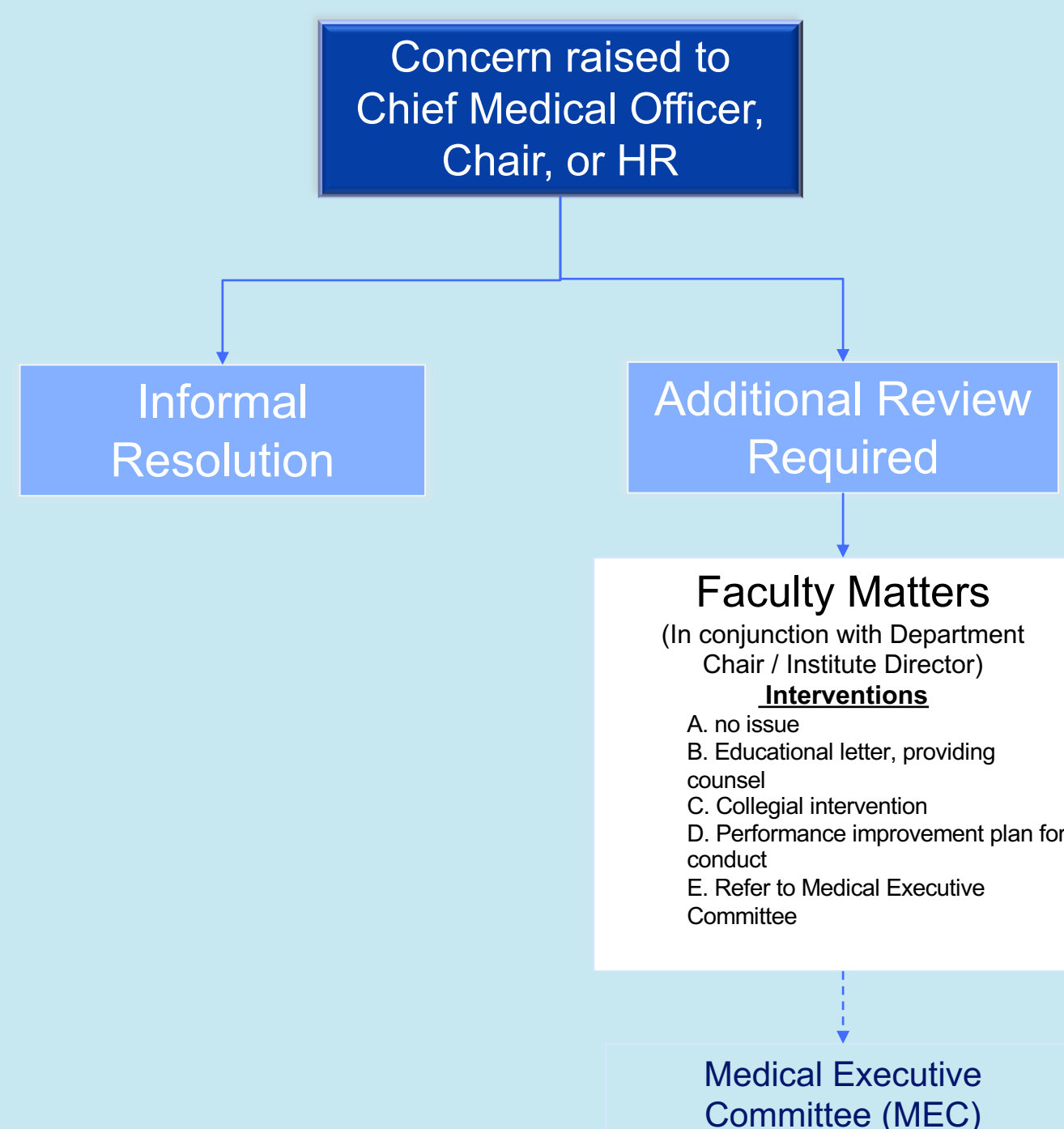
- Create structured expectations and progressive steps that are standardized.
- Offer team based support to leaders dealing with disruptive behavior that integrates appropriate documentation and input from leaders in key areas like legal and human resources (HR).
- Create a confidential means of sharing and storing information so it is available when needed.

Summary / Conclusions

- A standard, progressive approach to physician behavior issues is desirable and should lead to improved outcomes.
- A multi-disciplinary team including physician leaders, College of Medicine leaders, HR and legal is ideal.
- Clear documentation and confidentiality issues are paramount.

Process

- Reviewed literature about successful programs and discussed challenges with current process during leadership interviews.
- Reviewed current medical staff policies and regulations.
- New professionalism policies reviewed with key leaders and received feedback.



Next steps

- Educate the entire staff, use the process and find the opportunity areas.
- Expand coaching cohorts.
- Plan additional education and training for peer interventions.
- Measure improvement in engagement survey.