



Investigating the qualities for globally relevant health service managers

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Abstract:

Health systems are complex and continually changing across a variety of contexts and health service levels. The capacities needed by health managers to respond to current and emerging health issues across different health care organisations are not yet well understood. Studies to date have been country-specific and have not integrated different international and multi-level insights.

Aim: To capture the priority areas for health service management globally and the capabilities required of the health management workforce to address these and explore the implications for our postgraduate provision.

Method: In Phase 1 of the project a rapid review of evidence was undertaken examining the current challenges and priorities for health leadership and workforce management using an international perspective. In Phase 2 of the project fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with recent graduates to senior health managers and executives from seven different countries.

Results: Phase 1 identified a set of consistent challenges and emerging trends within healthcare sectors internationally for health leadership and management represented at system, organisational and individual levels. Phase 2 revealed four emerging themes that reflect competencies required of healthcare managers across countries: 1) Learning leaders 2) Innovative change agents 3) Collaborative stewards and 4) Evidence-informed practitioners.

Conclusion: Our findings suggest highly dynamic and challenging expectations for health service managers within and across health systems globally, that highlight and affirm, the need for our health management provision to foster resilience, professional identity formation and lifelong learning.