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**SMART LEADERS HEAL BETTER: EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE IN HEALTHCARE**

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**Abstract**

Emotional Intelligence is pivotal for effective healthcare leadership, enabling leaders to navigate complex emotional landscapes while fostering healing environment. Emotional Intelligence encompassing self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills enhances leader performance amid high stakes in clinical setting. Research demonstrates that emotionally intelligence leaders reduce staff burnout, improve team collaboration, and elevate patient satisfaction by bullying trust and managing adeptly.

**Key words: Emtional Intelligence, leader, healthcare, Empathy, Motivation**

**INTRODUCTION:**

Health care systems Globally are facing unmatched strain. Increasing patient expectation, workforce shortages, burnout, technological advancement, and intricate ethical dilemmas have made healthcare one of the most emotionally taxing field. Although clinical excellence, evidence based practice, and operational efficiency are crucial, they alone are no longer enough.

The idea of Emotional Intelligence has surfaced as an essential skill foe effective leadership. The leader who merges cognitive skill with emotional awareness foster setting where health care professionals excel, team work together, patients feel secure, and results enhance. In the realm of healthcare, leadership transcend administration, it serves as a healing influence.



Contemporary health care leadership goes beyond just clinical knowledge and operational effectiveness. Leaders need to manage intense stress, emotionally charged patient encounters, staffing shortages, and swift organizational transformations. In this regard, emotional intelligence (EI) has become a fundamental leadership skill that directly affects team performance, patient results, and organizational culture. Emotional intelligence encompasses the capacity to identify, comprehend, regulate, and skillfully apply emotions in oneself and in others.

### **Understanding Emotional Intelligence in Health Care Leadership**

Emotional intelligence is typically understood through five main elements:

#### **Self awareness:**

Acknowledging personal emotions, strength, weakness, and influence as a leader.

#### **Self-regulation:**

Regulating emotional responses, particularly in stressful situations.

#### **Motivation**

Sustaining intent, perseverance, and dedication.

#### **Empathy**

Recognizing and reacting suitably to the feelings of employees and patients.

#### **Social skills**

Developing trust, teamwork, and efficient communication.

In healthcare environments, where choices frequently pertain to life, death, and ethical intricacies, these skills become essential.

### **The Importance of Emotional Intelligence for Health Care Leaders**

#### **1. Enhancing patient centered care**

Leaders with emotional intelligence cultivate an environment of empathy and kindness. When leaders demonstrate respectful communication and emotional awareness, these actions influence front line staff, enhancing patient satisfaction, trust, and care experiences.

## **2. Minimizing Burnout and Enhancing Employee Wellness**

Health care workers experiences ongoing stress, ethical dilemmas, and emotional fatigue. Leaders who possess strong emotional intelligence are more adapt at identifying early indicators of burnout, offering emotional support, and fostering psychologically safe workplace environments, critical elements for staff retention and over all well being.

## **3. Enhancing Team Effectiveness and Cooperation**

Effective interpersonal dynamics are essential for multidisciplinary teams. Emotional intelligence allows leaders to handle conflicts positively, foster open communication, and bring together varied viewpoints to achieve common objectives.

## **3. Enhancing Decision-Making in High-Stress Situations**

Health care executives often faces critical decision in unpredictable and emotionally charged circumstances. EI facilitates well rounded decision making by minimizing emotional impulsiveness, lowering bias, and encouraging reflective reactions.

## **5. Fostering Transformation and Innovation**

Change within an organization frequently prompts resistance and feeling of anxiety. Leaders with emotional intelligence recognize feelings, convey information openly, and support teams during changes with trust and strength.

## **Reasons Healthcare Leadership Is Distinctively Emotional**

### **The Emotional Burden of Caregiving**

Healthcare workers frequently face pain, anxiety, sorrow, ethical challenges, and critical choices. Leaders function in this emotionally intense setting while managing regulatory demands, financial limitations, and organizational transformation.

- In contrast to numerous sectors, leaders in healthcare:
- Guide teams affected by trauma and grief.
- Make choices that impact human lives directly.



- Confront ethical intricacies every day.
- Oversee multidisciplinary teams characterized by varying values and power dynamics.
- This renders emotional intelligence indispensable rather than merely optional.

### **Smart Leaders Heal Better: The Leadership and Healing connection**

#### **1. Leadership Environment and Patient Results**

Various studies have shown a significant correlation between leadership actions and patient results. Teams guided by emotionally intelligent leaders frequently demonstrate:

- Reduced mortality and complication rates
- Increased patient satisfaction ratings
- Increased compliance with safety regulations
- Enhanced continuity of care
- Emotionally intelligent leaders foster psychological safety, allowing clinicians to voice concerns, report mistakes, seek assistance, and work together efficiently.
- Trust as a healing Mechanism
- Healing does not happen in isolation.
- Trust between patients and healthcare providers, as well as within care teams is essential.

#### **2. Leaders with emotional intelligence:**

Model clarity and modesty

Address errors with education instead of criticism.

Express yourself with clarity and empathy.

This culture of trust flows downwards, influencing the way care is provided at the bedside.

#### **Emotional Intelligence and Decision-Making in Clinical Settings**

### **1. Minimizing Cognitive Bias via Self-Insight**

Healthcare choices can be influenced by emotional and cognitive biases, particularly in stressful situations. Leaders possessing high self-awareness:

- Identify when stress or pride is affecting choices.
- Take a moment before responding without thinking.
- Promote varied viewpoints
- This leads to improved clinical governance and more secure systems.

### **2. Managing Conflicts Bias Through Self - awareness**

Disagreements are unavoidable in healthcare, especially within multidisciplinary teams. Leaders with emotional intelligence:

- Tackle conflict promptly instead of evading it.
- Combine assertiveness with compassion.

This stops escalation and maintains team unity, directly affecting the quality of care.

### **3. Empathy: The Heart of Healing Leadership**

#### **3.1 Beyond Surface Compassion**

Empathy is frequently addressed regarding clinician–patient interactions, yet leadership empathy is just as essential. Compassionate leaders:

- Comprehend the firsthand experiences of frontline employees.
- Identify indicators of burnout and ethical discomfort.
- Modify expectations in times of crisis
- When employees feel recognized and backed, they are more able to provide empathetic care
- Leadership with Emotional Intelligence during a Crisis



- Insights from International Health Crises

### **3.2. Empathy and Equity in Health Care**

Leaders with emotional intelligence are more prepared to tackle:

- Health inequalities
- Cultural variations
- Diverse workplace approaches

Through attentive listening and inclusive leadership, they foster equity in both the workforce and patient care.

## **4. Emotional Awareness and Employee Wellness**

### **4.1. Burnout as a Challenge in Leadership**

Burnout is commonly perceived as a personal issue, yet it is primarily a challenge related to system and leadership. Leaders with high emotional intelligence:

- Make discussions about mental health more common.
- Promote feasible workloads
- Safeguard recuperation duration

The style of their leadership has a direct impact on employee resilience and retention.

### **4.2. Safety in Psychology and Team Effectiveness**

Psychological safety the conviction that one can voice concern without the threat of repercussions is a key characteristic of emotionally intelligent leadership. In team with psychological safety:

- Mistakes are indicated sooner.
- Education is ongoing.
- Creativity thrives.

This is especially vital in healthcare, where a lack of communication can be fatal.

#### **4.3. The Study of Emotion and Recovery in Neuroscience**

##### **Stress, Leadership, and the Mind**

Persistent stress negatively affects memory, focus, and decision-making abilities. Emotionally intelligent leaders manage both their personal stress and the emotional climate of their teams.

Encouraging management:

- Lowers cortisol levels
- Enhances concentration and productivity
- Boosts immune and recovery processes

Thus, leadership behavior has biological effects.

#### **4.4. Mirror Neurons and Emotional Transmission**

Feelings spread easily from one person to another. Leaders establish the emotions atmosphere via tone, body language, and responses. Leaders who are calm and emotionally stable foster serene teams, which is crucial in high-pressure clinical environments.

##### **Developing Emotional Intelligence in Healthcare Leaders**

- Certainly. Emotional intelligence isn't static; it can be cultivated through:
- Guidance and advising
- Reflective practice involves thoughtful consideration of experiences, promoting personal and professional growth through analysis and evaluation. Review systems
- Mindfulness and stress reduction training

The most successful healthcare organizations prioritize the development of emotional intelligence strategically.

### **1. Incorporating Emotional Intelligence into Leadership Development**

- Advanced healthcare systems:
- Incorporate emotional intelligence into leadership competency models.
- Evaluate emotional intelligence when considering promotions.
- Offer continuous development instead of standalone workshops.

### **2. Leaders with emotional intelligence in times of crisis:**

- Express yourself truthfully, even if responses are not fully developed.
- Recognize fear and doubt.
- Combine firmness with empathy.
- These leaders uphold trust even in intense situations.

### **3. Guiding Through Transition and Ambiguity**

- The transformation of healthcare is ongoing.  
Leaders with emotional intelligence facilitate team adaptability by:
- Clarifying the reasons for change
- Hearing resistance without disregarding it
- Assisting individuals during changes
- Empathetic-led change is more enduring.

### **The Next Generation of Healthcare Leadership**

#### **1. From Authority to Empathetic Insight**

Conventional hierarchical leadership structures are becoming less suited to contemporary health care. The future is in hand of leaders who:

- Work together instead of competing.



- Pay attention as much as they guide.
- Repair systems, not merely oversee them.
- Emotional intelligence connects clinical proficiency with patient-focused care.

## **2. Assessing of What Is Really Important**

As healthcare advances, success measurements need to extend beyond financial and operational metrics to encompass:

- Employee involvement and wellness
- Trust and experience of patients
- Collaboration and culture within the team
- Leadership with emotional intelligence enhances all three.
- Emotional Awareness and Moral Leadership

### **Ethical challenges**

Ethical dilemmas are common in health care management including resource distribution, patient independence, and workforce fairness, to name a few.

Emotional intelligence improves ethical leadership through:

- ❖ Fostering compassion in ethically intricate choices.
- ❖ Fostering introspective practice and responsibility
- ❖ Harmonizing company objectives with human principles
- ❖ Leaders who recognize emotional impacts are more inclined to make decisions that are ethically responsible and empathetic.

### **Cultivating Emotional Intelligence in Healthcare Leaders**

Emotional intelligence can be developed through deliberate practice and support from the organization. Successful tactics consist of:



- Programs for leadership development centered on self-awareness and emotional management.
- 360-degree feedback to grasp interpersonal influence
- Guidance and support for developing reflective leadership skills.
- Training in mindfulness and stress management
- Cultures within organizations that prioritize emotional health and transparent communication.
- Integrating EI growth into leadership training guarantees lasting advantages for the organization.

### **Obstacles in Applying Emotional Intelligence**

Even though it is significant, emotional intelligence might be underestimated because of:

- ❖ Focus on technical or clinical abilities rather than interpersonal skills.
- ❖ Time limitations and elevated workloads
- ❖ Cultural reluctance to address emotions in workplace environments
- ❖ To overcome these obstacles, it is essential to redefine EI as a quantifiable, strategic leadership skill that is linked to organizational results.

### **Conclusion:**

Emotional intelligence serves as a core skill for successful leadership in health care. Through the development of self-awareness, empathy, communication, and resilience, leaders with emotional intelligence elevate patient care, empower teams, and cultivate organizations that are ethical and sustainable.

With the growing complexity of health care systems, investing in emotional intelligence is crucial it is vital for exceptional leadership and organizational achievement

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