

**Name, Degree:** Carmen Wah Liang, DO, MPH

**Professional Title, Organization:** Clinical Associate Professor, UCSF; Associate Medical Director, ZSFG Adult Urgent Care Center

**CHIP Title:** Physician Leadership Development

### **Project Description:**

Effective physician leadership at the front lines is critical to our health care system as it grapples with worsening workforce shortages, burnout, and attrition associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The national workforce deficit is projected to be more than 45,000 for primary care and 87,000 for specialty care physicians (Bhardwaj, 2022), and the annual cost of one physician vacancy per year is up to \$1 million or 2-3 times a physician's annual salary (Shanafelt et al., 2017). Health care organizations are investing more in senior physician leadership development but not in early-career physician, who are appointed leadership positions based on clinical skills and willingness to help but do not feel prepared for these roles (Shanafelt et. al., 2021).

I interviewed 27 physicians to understand what they needed to feel prepared for their clinical leadership roles. When asked about desired leadership development opportunities, 80% of their responses referred to training programs; opportunities to gain experience from others; and coaching, mentorship, and sponsorship (Liang et. al., 2023). My landscape analysis of leadership programs for UCSF physicians early in their administrative leadership careers revealed a lack of viable options based on scope, cost, and effect on retention.

To address this gap, I decided to work towards building a leadership development program at UCSF for early-career physicians who are gaining more administrative responsibilities in a clinical setting.

### **Key Findings and Lessons Learned:**

In September 2022, I began collaborating with the UCSF School of Nursing's Leadership Institute to create a physician leadership development program for the following reasons:

- We had a shared desire to build a culture of effective health care leadership.
- Its curriculum framework was aligned with what I identified in my research as critical components for physician leadership development.
- They had proven success with sustaining and expanding programming for multiple nursing cohorts.

In May 2023, the Leadership Institute approved our plan to move forward and create a leadership development program for early-career physicians. We began publicizing our program by presenting to clinical department and executive leaders across UCSF and soliciting nominations. In August 2023, we announced our call for applications to all UCSF physicians.

### **Next Steps:**

We are launching the Foundations for Excellence in Physician Leadership (FEPL) program's inaugural cohort in January 2024! Throughout the program, we will be conducting participant evaluations to assess program effectiveness. We hope to expand our program alumni network, create a pool of physician leaders qualified to fill leadership openings, and expand the UCSF Leadership Institute's offerings to the physician community and beyond. Depending on program

demand, we will consider adding additional cohorts, creating programming for physicians with distinct experience levels, and extending offerings to the community.