



# CEO Healthcare ROUNDTABLE

A Partnership of The CEO Advisory Network & The Healthcare Roundtable

## July 21, 2021 | Webinar

### ***“Moving Past the Pandemic | Applying New Cultural Changes and Leadership Skills”***

**with Phil Cass, PhD, CEO Physician Leadership Academy**



We are pleased to share the following summary of our CEO Healthcare Roundtable Webinar July 21, 2021, with **Phil Cass**, PhD, CEO of Physician Leadership Academy based in Columbus, OH.

experience in leadership positions and his many years working with physicians as Founder & CEO of the Physician Leadership Academy. Many of Dr. Cass’s comments focused on findings from a recently completed survey of physician attitudes that were based on recent conversations, the PLA survey, and some observations. They include the following:

- In discussions with physicians, many have indicated they feel they have “lost their way” and have lost the connection as to why they chose to become physicians.
- *Physicians noted an on-going feeling of being “alone.” This feeling starts with medical school where they are trained to be alone, to compete, to always be right, to win and to put their own personal needs aside. These feeling of loneliness and isolation have only been exacerbated by the pandemic.*
- Despite perceptions by health care administrators and the public, physicians have underestimated their own power to lead and create change

As our CEO Healthcare Roundtable member organizations work to adapt to the continued pressures and issues created by the pandemic, we were excited to engage our session participants in a timely discussion on the theme ***“Moving Past the Pandemic: Applying New Cultural Changes and Leadership Skills.”***

#### **PHYSICIANS IN A POST PANDEMIC WORLD | FEELINGS OF LONELINESS**

Our keynote speaker was Phil Cass, PhD., CEO, Physician Leadership Academy (PLA), who shared several poignant observations and perceptions about the current challenges faced by physicians as they move towards a post pandemic world. Dr. Cass’s observations were based on his over 30 years of

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Dr. Cass shared that his experience at the Physician Leadership Academy and, based on feedback from the survey, he has learned that, at the end of the day, for physicians “it is always about relationships.” He stated that physicians’ relationships with their patients is what maintains their sanity.

The most important things to physicians are relationships, personal connections, and empathy. *Dr. Cass noted that one of the cultural changes that needs to occur is that hospitals and health systems need to provide less management training for physicians and more leadership training.* Other suggested cultural changes included:

- Pay more attention to building and growing relationships
- Really listen carefully to concerns
- Make it a practice to formally interview physicians
- Create spaces where physicians can come together and focus on talking, not complete charts, eat snacks or watch TV

Finally, when talking about engaging physicians and developing physician leaders, Dr. Cass closed with a simple recommendation *“If it’s about ‘em, include ‘em”*

## CHALLENGES OF RETURNING TO WORK

Following Dr. Cass’s presentation, participants shared and discussed their current experiences and challenges with a variety of “return to work” issues with all levels of staffing from physicians to clinical support to operational support. Among topics discussed were levels of burn-out, balancing work-from-home preferences with return-to-office expectations, recruitment challenges, staffing shortages and the financial impact of use of agency labor, especially related to nurse staffing needs. One participant noted that the pandemic has helped expand and enhance technology enabled solutions which may make it easier for individuals to work from

home but perhaps at the expense of maintaining a sense of community and relationship building which can create challenges for the organization’s culture.

## CARING ORGANIZATIONS DURING COVID

The participants also shared ways that their organizations have demonstrated a “we care about you” culture and attitude during the pandemic through such actions as:

- Sending food and gift baskets to the homes of COVID positive employees
- Arranging temporary caregiver services and programs for children or elderly dependents of employees working long hours and / or working in stressful situations
- End of shift “Grab & Go” options for employees to get meals and groceries from the hospital’s cafeterias and food service areas

*Dr. Cass closed the webinar session with the following advice:*

- Identify and support your champions as they will get the word out about the caring culture of the organization
- Make it a priority to focus on ways to develop compassion during chaos

## Thanks to our Keynote Speaker and Roundtable Members for a Valuable and Informative Discussion

We would like to thank Dr. Phil Cass for an interesting and informative discussion about his unique perspective of physician burn-out and the importance of building a caring culture in our healthcare organizations. Thanks also to all our members who contributed to this important discussion. It is one of the key values of membership in the CEO Healthcare Roundtable.

To View the July 21, 2021  
Webinar, Click Below



To Access Phil Cass's Presentation,  
Click [Here](#) and [Here](#)

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