

Where applicable, please be as specific as possible as to role, impact, and outcome

1. Tell us why you want to participate in this program and what are you hoping for as a result? (max 250-500 words) Consider including a description of your strengths and areas for development.

Throughout my medical career, I have been drawn to formal leadership roles out of a strong desire to positively influence the systems and organizations which deliver health care to Nova Scotians. The professional satisfaction that has come with leadership is second only to that which I obtain from providing clinical care. Despite many successes as a leader (described below), there are still things I would like to accomplish that have proved challenging.

I have previously completed courses to develop my leadership skills, and I have learned a great deal that has increased my interpersonal effectiveness with my team and colleagues. However, I still find it difficult to exert positive impact at the systems level where I believe large-scale change is needed. I have concluded it is no longer enough for me to take online courses and two-day workshops – a longitudinal, workplace-based, team learning program such as the PLDP is what I need now to continue my growth as a leader.

While physicians can play key role in systems change, we do not always have the appropriate skills to do so – and sometimes we don't realize this is the case! From what I have heard from colleagues who have participated in previous PLDP cohorts, the program not only provides real-life opportunities to work on complex problems, it also provides feedback and coaching which I believe would be invaluable for helping me identify – and change – behaviors that may be holding me back.

In the past 3 years, I have come to appreciate the complexity of working in a multi-stakeholder environment where tackling issues means building coalitions and influencing policy. In order to extend my influence, I feel it is now necessary for me to focus on acquiring the knowledge and skills that will help me take these steps. It is with this hope that I am applying for the PLDP program.

2. Tell us about yourself as a leader. (max 250-400 words) Consider including examples of significant change initiatives you may have led or key leadership accomplishments you are proud of and any previous leadership development training experience.

My beliefs about leadership have been changed over time. When I first became an attending staff at our local hospital, I thought that I could not be leader because I did not fit the 'command and control' model that I had observed during my residency. However, this changed as I became more involved with our medical staff association and had the privilege of observing others with a more collaborative style of leadership.

An early leadership opportunity came when I was asked to chair our Morbidity and Mortality committee. Not only did this improve my skills at chairing committees, it opened my eyes to a significant deficiency in our handling of acute cases on the inpatient unit. It was around that time that I took a PLI course which introduced me to the concept of transformational leadership, which resonated with me. Over the next two years, I worked with the staff on the unit to decrease adverse events by 65%. I am fortunate that I had such an excellent team and supportive mentors at this early stage of my career, because the positive experience encouraged me to take on additional roles, such as Clinical Director, which I held for 5 years until 2018.

I have also taken on roles in medical education such as site director for the clinical clerks in my speciality, and in 2017 I completed the Faculty of Medicine's online Emerging Leaders in Academic Medicine course. Even though my leadership roles have been clinical rather than academic, I found

the course especially useful for making connections via the discussion boards with faculty around the Maritimes.

In 2019, I took on a position with the health authority. This has been a significant change from working at the level of my local hospital. I am excited, but also somewhat overwhelmed by the challenges I see. However, I believe my collaborative style of leadership will serve me well at this new level of responsibility.

3. What is the impact you want to have in the health-care system and how will this program prepare you for that? (max 250-400 words)

The single biggest challenge in my position is retention of physicians. We have lost 12 physicians over the past 2 years, and incentives and processes which have been helpful for recruitment do not seem to have the same impact when it comes to keeping people in the area. Until we are able to establish a stable physician workforce, we will not be able to make the changes necessary to improve the quality of care we deliver.

Retention of physicians is a complex problem, and solutions will need to involve government, the health authority, and communities. I have some preliminary ideas about how this can happen, but I am open to new insights and approaches. One of the advantages of the PLDP is that there is an opportunity for networking, which is lacking in my setting. I believe there may be ideas that would be shared informally that could be beneficial to the strategy I wish to implement. The group-based learning that is part of PLDP will also be good practice for the collaborative work that will be needed, and I am especially interested in that part of the program.

As well, before I get too far into my plan, I want to make sure my own skills at communication and collaboration are optimized. Based on what I have heard from colleagues who took the program in past years, I believe the PDLP will assist with this. Ideally, it will also help build my confidence as a leader, which will be necessary for dealing with various stakeholders and levels of potential resistance from government.