



The “Innovation in Medicine for Physicians” Series

Our three part informational series provides valuable insight into the complexities of innovation and the untapped potential in today’s medical industry. Understanding change at three increasingly complex levels is an important skill for physicians and a critical skill for physician leaders. The first level involves changing the behavior of professionals. The next level improves specific clinical problems using the tools and processes for stable systems. The last level involves innovation within complex systems such as clinical teams, organizations, and communities. We focus on innovations that eliminate waste at all levels. We propose a strategy to properly invest in medicine’s key functional unit, the clinical team, and its most valuable resources, the physicians and other members of the healthcare team. This series is useful in all healthcare settings regardless of size or type of organization.

In part one, we present a case study to illustrate key concepts and potential dangers when changing complex systems. These dangers in healthcare include misapplying technology, inappropriately focusing on growth, putting too much faith in the market and government, ignoring resource productivity, poor leadership and governance, and failing to support and involve frontline workers in innovation. We demonstrate success within stable systems with results from the Intermountain Healthcare system. Part one concludes by defining the specific roles of individuals and sharing a decision model supporting successful innovation.

In the second part, we examine the challenges facing medical corporations and the importance of culture in innovation. We use the inception and demise of a successful innovation to illustrate these challenges. After discussing innovations in groups and corporations, we present the concept of natural capitalism as the best model for medical corporations.

In the third part, we review the critical importance of money and the development of a learning environment to creating successful innovation in complex systems. We combine two successful case studies from vision services to demonstrate what is possible. We summarize the concepts and approach that can be applied to all medical and surgical specialties. We close with the concept of “Sustainable High Performing Clinical Teams” as the foundation for success in the medical industry.

This series can be given as three one-hour presentations or as a half day workshop. The material can be expanded or modified to meet the needs of specific organizations or groups of healthcare leaders and professionals.