

2019

Destination Excellence - Second Annual Update and Planning Day



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2/1/2020

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1.0 Introduction and Background

In December 2017 the Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University, launched its strategic plan – *Destination Excellence*. During the first year of the plan’s implementation (2018), the focus was on establishing the core project teams that would oversee the implementation of the plan and on communicating the spirit and language of the plan through presentations to various internal and external stakeholders. The first project team to be formed was the Destination Excellence Implementation Steering Team (DEIST) with a mandate to oversee the implementation and to provide guidance throughout the process. The DEIST is co-chaired by Dr. Margaret Steele, dean, Faculty of Medicine, and Gerona McGrath, education specialist (DEIST).

Four project teams in the areas of wellness, research, social accountability and progress report card were put in place to develop plans and monitor progress towards achieving the desired outcomes of thriving learners and graduates, impactful research and healthier communities. The mentorship team was already in place at the time *Destination Excellence* was launched but was added to the list of core implementation teams because of the importance of mentorship in achieving the outcomes of the strategic plan. In December 2018, the first annual *Destination Excellence* update and planning day took place. The summary report for that day is available in Appendix A.

The second annual *Destination Excellence* update and planning day took place on November 29, 2019. The agenda for the day (Appendix B) was similar to the one used for the 2018 event but featured more presentations and included an excellence in education panel designed to highlight educational initiatives across the continuum of medical education. Approximately 90 members of the Faculty of Medicine community attended the session (Appendix C). As in past years, invitations were sent from the Office of the Dean to senior faculty and staff leaders within the Faculty of Medicine, emerging leaders chosen by their respective heads in the various units/divisions/disciplines, members of the original strategic plan steering committee and all members of the project teams.

The goals of the day were 3-fold:

- Provide updates to participants regarding the work done by the various *Destination Excellence* project teams over the previous year;
- Solicit input from attendees to help inform the work of the teams as they move forward with fulfilling their respective mandates; and
- Profile some of the interesting and innovative initiatives taking place within the realm of education excellence.

2.0 Input from participants to project teams

As noted above, one of the goals of the day was to provide updates to participants regarding the progress of the teams. Each of the presenters provided a summary of the work to date and asked attendees to provide input to specific questions. The presentations for the day have all been uploaded to the Faculty of Medicine’s [Brightspace \(D2L\)](#) site and can be viewed there. The summary of questions posed to the audience throughout the day is available in Appendix D.

Each table had a recorder who was given the option to either take notes in a Word file and submit after the sessions or enter their notes directly into a Qualtrics survey. Having the online option available also afforded individual participants the ability to provide input directly.

Perhaps because of the very full agenda and the time allocated to each, the input for teams with brief question and answer sessions (i.e., culture of excellence, mentorship and progress report card) was sparse. The input for teams with full break-out sessions (wellness, research and social accountability) was more substantive and varied.

- Some common themes arose for the Wellness team around the need for training for different groups, developing policies and guidelines related to wellness, and generally promoting a culture change within the Faculty of Medicine regarding wellness in various contexts.
- Input for the research team was also varied but many participants referred to the need to collaborate more, promote inter-disciplinary linkages among faculty from different areas of expertise and encouraging and supporting more clinical faculty in research.
- Input for social accountability stressed the need to be inclusive when thinking about the composition of the social accountability advisory board and to maintain current relationships while building new ones with different stakeholder groups.

3.0 Evaluation of the day

Participants were given the opportunity to evaluate the day using either a paper evaluation in the room or an online evaluation form. The total response rate was 46 per cent (41/89), down from 60 per cent the previous year. Results for the quantitative questions ranged from 8.5/10 to 9/10 with the overall success of the day being rated at 8.5/10, the overall organization of the day at 9/10 and the appropriateness of the presentations at 8.7/10. Most of the feedback was positive and focused on the value of learning about the work that is taking place related to *Destination Excellence*, networking with colleagues and peers, and having discussions/sharing ideas in the break-out sessions.

Participants also made several helpful suggestions for future update and planning events including that the organizers provide more of an overview or context to the day for those who may be new to participating in these events or who have had limited exposure to *Destination Excellence* or the implementation teams; consider better ice-breaker activities for participants; consider a different approach for assigning note takers; have fewer people at the tables; be more explicit about how the input will be used; and have coffee available at all breaks. While the presentations were well received for the most part, the education panel session at the end of the day was perceived as disjointed.

When developing the agenda and execution scenario for the next update and planning day, the feedback from 2019 will be taken into consideration. In particular, the DEIST will be consulted regarding better ways to highlight educational excellence across the continuum. The evaluation results are available in Appendix E.

4.0 Next steps

- As we enter the third year of the *Destination Excellence* implementation, the work of the project teams is shifting to smaller working groups carrying out specific sub-projects under the umbrella of each project team. For example, the Wellness team has a working group examining the

results of the Wellness survey and developing a set of recommendations for the DEIST to consider.

- Each project team has been provided with the input from the update and planning day participants. Each team has been asked to report back to the DEIST to acknowledge receipt of the input, summarize the input and explain how the input was utilized. Verbal reports will be provided to the DEIST at its February meeting with written reports provided at the August meeting.
- This year participants were given two options for providing feedback during the sessions. Logistically this was problematic afterwards when compiling information from two different sources. For the next update and planning day, the process for collecting feedback will be streamlined such that only one system is used and participants will be made aware of this prior to attending the sessions.
- The Culture of Excellence team is being assembled and will develop a project plan in the winter of 2020.
- The Mentorship team has completed its work and responsibility for maintenance and oversight of mentorship has been assigned to the Office of Student Affairs (to be renamed the Office of Learner Wellbeing and Success).
- To address feedback regarding perceived discrepancies in the treatment of different learners, a series of focus groups will be organized by the Office of the Deans to better understand the issues and to develop mechanisms to mediate those issues.