Physician Compacts are essentially stated agreements of expectations between medical staff and the organisation.

Physician Compacts are just one tool to foster medical engagement at the LHD or facility level.

Physician Compacts are about patient safety and quality outcomes linked to consistency of performance based on agreed behaviours, expectations and aligned purpose with shared goals.

Social Compacts are agreements for mutual benefit between individuals and groups”.

In a sense they have always existed in medicine as unwritten norms and expectations about the roles of doctors as professionals, but social compacts are changing; medical staff in the past had full autonomy, practicing the art of medicine 24-hours a day with the expectation of good recompense. The modern world talks about evidence base, multidisciplinary teams, patient cared care, accountability and reasonable work life balance.

A Physician Compact will:
- Engender a culture of excellence and high quality care
- Set and articulate expectations
- Align behaviours to support common goals/vision
- Require mutual accountability
- Be a living document and adapt with change
- Be hard wired into organisational system and meetings

A Physician Compact should:
- Improve culture by the process of its development
- Involve open dialogue and frank discussions
- Further align expectations
- Change and develop with the organisation

The journey to create the Compact is as important as the final result
The Give: Doctors give what the organisation needs to achieve its goals.

- Patient centred care
- Patients and colleagues first
- Respect for all
- Listen & Communicate
- Collaboration
- Pursue and foster excellence
- Follow best practice
- Accountable practice
- Keep informed
- Open to change and reform
- Educate and innovate

The Get: The organisation provides the tools doctors need to meet their commitment.

- Collaborative decision making with doctors
- Share information and strategic intent
- Set clear priorities and focus
- Constructive dialogue and feedback
- Financial transparency and accountability
- Provide tools to improve practice
- Provide data and user friendly systems
- Pursue and foster excellence
- Support education and leadership
- Appreciate and reward contributions
- Lead with Integrity and accountability

Support for Physician Compacts:

- Organisation commitment and leadership from the top
- An existing framework of engagement, collaboration and accountability
- Clearly articulated common goals and a vision
- Leadership development for senior doctors
- Medical champions with leadership skills
- Collaboration and facilitated discussions

Compacts have been used around the world in various forms:

Further Reading


