

The professional conversations many doctor leaders are never formally taught how to have

Many doctors step into leadership roles with strong clinical expertise but little formal preparation for the professional conversations leadership requires day to day.

Whether you are leading a department, supervising junior staff, managing a clinic team or navigating complex collegial relationships, your effectiveness often comes down to how confidently and skilfully you can engage in difficult, nuanced and sometimes high stakes conversations.

These conversations are rarely straightforward and many doctors tell us they feel underprepared for this part of their role.

Some of the most important professional conversations include:

The check-in conversation

- Creating regular opportunities to connect with team members, understand workload and wellbeing pressures, identify concerns early and maintain professional connection and visibility as a leader.

The feedback conversation

- Providing constructive, respectful and actionable feedback in a way that supports growth, accountability and professional standards without unnecessarily damaging confidence or relationships.

Difficult conversations

- Addressing behaviour, communication issues, performance concerns or professional tensions that are often avoided because they feel uncomfortable, sensitive or high risk.

Addressing and de-escalating tension or conflict

- Managing disagreement, frustration and interpersonal dynamics before they escalate and negatively impact team function, culture or patient care.

Performance and development review conversations

- Leading structured conversations about performance, expectations, strengths, career development and future goals in a meaningful and productive way.

Follow-up conversations that maintain accountability and momentum

- Revisiting agreed actions, expectations and commitments to ensure progress occurs and issues do not quietly drift unresolved.

Strategic networking and relationship building conversations

- Building trusted professional relationships across teams, departments and organisations that support collaboration, influence and career development over time.

The R U OK? Conversation

- Checking in on colleagues who may be struggling, overwhelmed or showing signs of distress and taking up an appropriate duty of care in a professional setting.

Articles, webinars and leadership resources can provide useful frameworks and techniques.

We have created many such resources in our Leadership Insight Series

<https://amavic.com.au/insights/collections/leadership-insights>

However, applying these skills effectively within real healthcare environments is often far more complex.

Our leadership coaching programs creates structured space to work through these conversations within the context of your actual professional reality. This may include preparing for upcoming discussions, unpacking difficult dynamics, practicing communication approaches and developing greater confidence in how you take up leadership within your team or workplace.

These skills are not only important for leadership effectiveness. They are increasingly connected to a leader's responsibility to contribute to psychologically safe and professionally supportive workplaces.

For doctors wanting to strengthen these capabilities in a structured and practical way, AMA Victoria offers 1:1 leadership coaching programs delivered over six [Leadership Coaching Program for Senior Doctors – 6 sessions](#) and 10 sessions [Leadership Coaching Program for Senior Doctors – 10 session](#) online at times that suit your schedule.

These programs are recognised as accepted CPD activities within the AMC CPD Home framework and may also represent a valuable use of CME entitlement for consultants and senior doctors.

You can also start with a complimentary [15 minute Leader Check In | AMA Victoria](#) to discuss your current context and professional development needs.