

Second World Congress in Efficiency and Economy in Health Care April 4-5-6-7-1990

Programmed Reduction of House Staff Working Hours In a University Hospital

P.H.M. van de Weijer, B. Goes
Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

PROGRAMMED REDUCTION OF HOUSE STAFF WORKING HOURS IN A UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.

van de Weijer P.H.M. , Goes B. Academic Medical Centre (AMC) Amsterdam, the Netherlands

In 1987 the Board of Directors of the AMC decided to improve working conditions for the 237 members of the house staff. A scheduled 55-hour workweek and a 24-hour limit on workshifts were adopted. The impact on the hospital organization was significant: the continuity and quality of medical care and of the training program for the house staff had to be guaranteed in the new scheme. Implementation was delegated to the 29 different hospital departments. Management support for this process was given by the hospital administration. Substantive changes in the departments were necessary involving:

- analysis of management objectives, modification of shifts and work schedules, provision of ancillary support and additional staffing. Specific solutions differed between departments. Twenty-eight additional physicians were employed. Funding for this project was found within the hospital budget.

Evaluation after 1 year showed that implementation was achieved and particularly well in those departments where medical views and tradition had changed.