

with implementing a telemedicine service. However, I strongly believe the future of medicine will require the introduction of telemedicine capabilities to best serve our dispersed patient population.

Smith: That may be true, but I'm not sure the physicians really want to do this. Changing from in-person care to providing advice over a computer is an enormous change in how we practice medicine. Also, are you sure that our information technology systems are able to support high-quality telemedicine? I have heard horror stories about how physicians try to provide care remotely but problems with electronic connectivity make the "visit" a series of "can you hear me?" comments.

Johnson: That's something we definitely need to consider. I'd like to make consideration of this telemedicine opportunity a major goal for the coming year, and I'd appreciate it if you would consider being on a task force to make this happen. What do you think?

Smith: I think introducing telemedicine is a huge risk for Geneva, Dan. But I'm game to learn more. I'd be happy to join your task force.

Considering the Resistance

Johnson recognized that, in addition to uncovering some attitudes toward telemedicine, he had learned quite a bit about Geneva's organizational culture during these exploratory conversations. The predominant culture seemed comfortable clinging to the status quo, and few individuals were open to the possibility of change. He had felt strong resistance from Chapman and Smith, and he knew that such resistance was a major hurdle that would need to be overcome for the introduction of telemedicine capabilities to proceed and succeed.

Johnson had to plan his next steps carefully. He knew that doctors valued evidence, and he had to build a good case for moving forward with the telemedicine efforts. He felt that learning more about past implementation successes and failures would be helpful, but he also suspected that other valuable information existed of which he was not aware. Johnson decided to recruit a summer resident to help him expand his search for evidence and to help inform the decision about introducing telemedicine capabilities at GHS.

Case Questions

1. What types of information should the summer resident collect to build the overall evidence case for telemedicine at Geneva? Where should she look to find this evidence?