



Health Care Professionals Seek MBA Prescription at MIT Sloan

Seek to boost managerial skills to improve health care system

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--With Obamacare moving from political posturing to implementation, this fall's new class at the MIT Sloan School of Management includes doctors and other health care professionals who see an MBA degree as a prescription to enhance not only their own careers, but the health care system itself.

"I strongly believe that the healthcare field is the next economic 'boom,' similar to the dot.com boom in the 90's and mobile communication over this past decade," says Alan Christophe, a Roslyn, NY, native who spent about three years working in the pharmaceutical and health care industries before enrolling in MIT Sloan's MBA program. "Healthcare is the most fragmented industry in the U.S. and I believe it is fragmented because of management deficiencies in the private and public sector."

Dr. Andrew Brown, a Toronto radiologist, says he decided to temporarily hang up his white coat because "healthcare is in desperate need of new ideas and new ways of doing things. Sloan's rich entrepreneurial heritage and vast innovation ecosystem makes it an ideal place for a physician looking to shake things up in healthcare." The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – better known as Obamacare – creates both challenges and opportunities, he says. "There will certainly be growing pains as the healthcare industry adjusts to this new regulatory climate. Those individuals and organizations able to make the adjustments may contribute to substantial improvements in health outcomes and cost-effectiveness. There is still a lot of work to be done but I'm optimistic that as an industry we will find a way to expand access to high-quality healthcare. We can't afford not to."

Brown and Christophe are among more than 400 new students arriving at MIT Sloan from across the globe and from a wide range of industry sectors. Though many new MBAs are drawn from such traditional fields as consulting, finance, and engineering, health care is also making its presence known.

"I chose Sloan because of its robust health care curriculum, longstanding partnership with Boston hospitals and reputation as an epicenter of entrepreneurship and innovation," says Dr. KC Collins, a native of Pittsfield, MA, who has completed his third year of residency in general surgery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. "After graduating from Sloan, I hope to return to the world of academic surgery with an enhanced understanding of business

operations, health care economics and biodesign. My goal is to earn a leadership role that will enable me to catalyze meaningful improvements at the interface of business and medicine.”

He and other health care professionals will also benefit from MIT Sloan’s global perspective, says Roberto Hernandez, who has worked for about seven years in Boston as a consultant with a focus on healthcare. “I hope to take advantage of the Global Health Delivery Lab to apply an international perspective to healthcare in the United States, which is currently very specific to this country,” he says.

Michelle Villagra, a Chino, California, native who worked for a not-for-profit public health plan before coming to MIT Sloan, cites “MIT’s emphasis on innovation” in deciding to seek her MBA, “It will allow me to explore impactful ways to carry out my passion to improve health care. I am very interested in the digital health space and I believe it can help people better manage their health and prevent illness.”

MIT Sloan healthcare courses available to her and other MBA students include Economics of Healthcare and Introduction to Healthcare Delivery in the U.S.: Market and System Challenges, as well as elective “Action Learning” courses such as Healthcare Lab, GlobalHealth Lab and Operations Lab. More than 20 MIT Sloan faculty members, plus other faculty across the MIT campus, have a strong interest in healthcare and health-related research.

Dr. John MacDonald, a family practitioner also from Toronto, is looking forward to his time at MIT Sloan. “I hope the healthcare courses at MIT will introduce me to the business of medicine that was previously invisible to me as a clinician,” he says. “I hope to better understand the economic pressures, politics, and opportunities for innovation within medicine. As a health-interested business student, I think it is the perfect time to be coming to the United States and try to be a part of changing the system for the better.”

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