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# Jeff-CHAT Offers students an Interprofessional Forum to Discuss Experiences

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## Jeff-CHAT Offers students an Interprofessional Forum to Discuss Experiences

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Feelings of frustration, loss, and exhaustion are common among healthcare workers. Students placed among new experiences and in a dependent learning role are not shielded from these emotions but often experience them differently from other members of the healthcare team. In addition to the systematic and individual support available through TJUH, for the past year and a half Jeff-CHAT (Compassion, Humanism, Altruism, Trust) has provided a forum for students to discuss and reflect on difficult emotions and situations.

Jeff-CHAT is modeled after the Schwartz Center Rounds, which “offer healthcare providers a regularly scheduled time during their fast-paced work lives to openly and honestly discuss social and emotional issues that arise in caring for patients” ([www.theschwartzcenter.org](http://www.theschwartzcenter.org)). Studies have shown that regular attendance to these rounds increases compassion, improves teamwork, and protects burnout among healthcare workers.

Jeff-CHAT, is in its second year and provides a student-run, student-only monthly rounds venue. The rounds are centered on a topic, such as “Putting

compassion to the test” or “Feelings of failure when things don’t work.” Three student panelists from medicine, nursing, physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), pharmacy and social work start the rounds by presenting a short, personal experience relating to the topic. Each panelist brings his or her own perspective in examining the different facets of the issue. The discussion is subsequently opened to the entire audience for the remainder of the rounds.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from receptive participatory audiences. The rounds were initially expected to encourage students to share and discuss personal experiences and feelings, but comments have often focused on students’ increased awareness that we and our specialty are not alone. OT and nursing students alike face supervisors with whom they’ve disagreed over patients, and medical and PT students both know the powerlessness of watching a patient’s condition decline. The shared experiences help students to not only accept and balance their own feelings, but also to acknowledge and relate to those of other team members.

Ultimately, we hope that Jeff-CHAT will become more fully integrated into health professions training, with support from students, faculty, and administrators throughout Thomas Jefferson University. This is the first program for students in the country, and the hope is that the positive student reception and, eventually noticeable impact on student careers and well-being, will encourage other universities to provide a similar interdisciplinary forum.