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Self-Care in the Workplace

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ADVANCING CARE.
ENHANCING LIVES.

Abstract

The following project evaluated current self-care practices in the workplace and recognized the need for a unique and easy way for staff to practice self-care. Self-care helps to prevent burn out & compassion fatigue.

South Wing 5, a surgical trauma/surgical intermediate care floor, is known to be a fast paced and high acuity unit which could benefit from self-care interventions. A trial of 4-7-8 breathing technique badge reel cards, "Me-Time" cards, and an educational bulletin board were included in this project.

Self-care at work has the potential to decrease stress and increase productivity by implementing self-care practices into daily routines.

Introduction

Self-care is a practice of paying attention to and treating one's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Clinical staff rarely take the breaks they need during their busy workdays. Studies have shown that this leads to burn out and compassion fatigue which can be directed towards peers or patients.

Self-care can improve negative emotions associated with working in a healthcare setting. It has been shown that it is both beneficial for the individual and organizations to take part in promoting self-care to prevent burn out and negative emotions such as, anger, anxiety and fear.



Methodology

The following interventions were implemented over a 5-week period to help promote self-care among staff:

1. Pre-surveys were distributed to all staff prior the start of interventions.
2. A bulletin board was displayed that included common felt emotions during work as a flip card with interventions for each emotion inside.
3. Badge reel cards for staff to reference that included self-care ideas and the 4-7-8 breathing technique.
4. "Me time" cards that staff could utilize for themselves or to give to others as a way of expressing the need for self-care in the moment. These cards allowed 5-minutes of break for needed self-care during the workday.
5. Post-surveys were distributed and then collected.



Bulletin Board on SW5

Results

Pre-surveys were completed by 45/124 staff or 36% of the staff.

- 62% stated that they were interested in self-care at work
- 11% of those surveyed stated maybe/unsure
- 27% said that they would not like to do it

Post-surveys were completed by 20/124 staff, or 16% of the staff.

- 70% stated that they participated in learning/using self-care practices
- 71% noticed a decrease in stress

-10% given a "Me-time" Card and 5% of nurses used them

- For those who used the Me-time card, nurses reported it made them feel as if someone cared about their wellbeing and it was a great reminder to care for oneself.

Barriers to participation in the self-care activities as reported by staff included:

- 1.No time for self-care for various reasons
2. Patient assignments too heavy
- 3.Too many patients to transport.

Another barrier was the implementation of the Daily Management System (DMS) at the same time as our project. In hindsight it would have been good to incorporate the project into the DMS.

Conclusion

In the future, the team intends to take the lessons learned about timing of implementation, meeting staff where they are at, and increasing the amount of "Me-Time" cards circulating around the unit.

With the implementation of self-care practices on units, there could be a corresponding decrease in stress and increase productivity. With this study we hoped to accomplish promoting self-care in the healthcare environment, relieve burnout using simple quick tools, and promote better communication between team members. By developing a more holistic work environment, we hope to be role models of self-care for the South Wing 5 team members, and eventually the hospital.