Workplace compassion

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Understanding the problem

Consequences for staff

• Compassion fatigue
• Vicarious traumatisation
• Secondary traumatic stress
• Shame
• Guilt
• Anger
• Self-doubt
• Depression
• Substance abuse disorders, and/or other anxiety disorders
• Symptomatic display of unethical behaviour

Consequences for services

• Recruitment and retention
• Increased medical error
• Increased infection rates
• Increased mortality rates
• Poorer patient experiences

Sources

• Organisational (e.g. bullying, workplace aggression, poor job satisfaction.)
• Occupational (e.g. Obstetric emergencies, stillbirth, unexpected maternal mortality)

Help seeking?

"Patient comes first"
"Patient centred care"
"Service and sacrifice"

- Pezaro, S, Clyne, W and Gerada, C "Confidentiality, anonymity and amnesty for midwives in distress seeking online support–Ethical?" *Nursing Ethics* (2016): 096973016654315.
What do service users see?

‘I can see the senior midwives coming in to perform the procedures which she was failing to do, rolling their eyes.’

‘The midwife was clearly stressed, she was really impatient with me.’

‘They both spent a lot of time visiting me … telling me how they do it better than the other midwife.’

‘They need to be supported from within; they can’t be reliant on the birthing mothers to hold their hands and pat them on the back.’

‘Midwives should be able to gain help without their workplace knowing.’

‘If she was having a good day I would have felt calmer in the situation and probably wouldn’t have needed an epidural.’

Positive staff experience leads to:

- Reduced absence sickness rates.
- Reduced staff costs.
- Improved performance.
- Improved moral.
- Increased staff retention.
- Increased productivity.

Why caring for the people who care matters

‘Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide’
Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide

Positive staff experience leads to:
- Reduced number of medical errors.
- Reduced infection rate.
- Reduced mortality rate.
- Improved safety.
- Improved patient experience.

Medical errors cost the NHS £1.4m a year.

Why caring for the people who care matters

‘Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide’
What #ShowsWorkplaceCompassion?

260 Tweets analysed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership and Management</th>
<th>Values and Culture</th>
<th>Activities and actions</th>
<th>Personalized Policies and Procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embedded organizational culture of caring for one another</td>
<td>Common purpose in a team</td>
<td>Small gestures of kindness</td>
<td>Recognition of the emotional and physical impact of healthcare work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking openly to learn from mistakes</td>
<td>Feeling valued</td>
<td>Provision of emotional support</td>
<td>Recognition of non-work personal context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No blame/no bullying management</td>
<td>Being heard</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work/life balance is respected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspiring leaders and collective leadership</td>
<td>Enjoying work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Respecting the right to breaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial investment in staff</td>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td></td>
<td>Being treated well when unwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize humanity and diversity</td>
<td>Use of caring language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide

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Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide

‘Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide’
Working examples

Co-creation of posters & lanyards reflecting staff values

‘Your Voice Our Future’ (YVOF), a dedicated crowdsourcing platform for staff to start honest conversations and be heard

Above and Beyond: a thank you scheme for staff to send personalized cards via staff engagement teams

Schwartz Rounds

Trust wide initiative known as ‘Speak Easy’ (3x per year)

‘Invest in Yourself’ microsite launched which is accessible for staff whilst they are out and about.

The Academy of Fabulous Stuff CIC developed and launched the Fab-O-Meter (www.fab-ometer.com), Snapshot data

"tea & biscuits" sessions with one of the members of the leadership team on a rolling 6-week basis.

Resource pack to support workplace compassion
“Experience of Care: Patients and Staff Together”

The conundrum

Initiatives to attain greater performance against a target to improve patient experience may be at the expense of staff morale and increased sickness absence.

Whilst performance against the patient experience indicator may improve, overall efficiency may reduce.

Economic theory of ‘production possibility frontiers’ can be used to conceptualise this.

Through better understanding system level trade-offs, and working to maximise performance against both dimensions, rather than productivity targets alone, NHS service providers may become more efficient.

Resource pack to support workplace compassion
“Experience of Care: Patients and Staff Together”

The change

Co-creation approach

Adoption of a ‘scrap the silos’ mindset

Utilisation of data to measure any impact on both patient and staff experience

Identification of a discrete improvement initiative that can be completed in a short timeframe (maximum of 3 months)

Resource pack to support workplace compassion
The impact

‘This is critical to achieve innovation and change.’

‘We very often work in silos not being aware of colleagues objectives and targets. This can mean duplication of work. Working together drives stronger objectives and more joined up working’

‘I found it informative and liked the structure. It also gave me the opportunity to work with other colleagues on a project instead of in a silo’

‘We have realised there are some staff engagement activities we need to stop and to develop our approach’

‘I am aware the Organisational Development team and patient experience staff are now working collaboratively. Huge change.’

‘I truly believe that linking the two is incredibly important as patient experience reflects the organisation and engaged staff’
Covid-19: Supporting nurses’ psychological and mental health

- Talk to colleagues, they may well relate!
- Be aware of your peers and whether they have eaten/drunk/rested
- Consider buddying systems (noting staff skill mix), huddles, shared breaks and scheduled team ‘off-load’ sessions
- Check in more than once and be approachable and authentic
- Respect individuality, give recognition, and seek out opportunities to reframe negatives and boost each other’s wellbeing
- Be neutral, non-judgmental ‘compassionate witness’
- Remind peer about how they are safe here and now
- Brainstorm and problem solve solutions together
- Show understanding and validate concerns
- Praise and give positive feedback
- Evaluate whether staff spaces are conducive to rest and recuperation


Maben, J. Taylor C. and Bridges, J. 2020. Guidance to support nurses’ psychological well-being during Covid-19 crisis. University of Surrey and the University of Southampton © Published online 14.4.20
Asking the right questions...

What are/have been your greatest challenges, hassles or frustrations? What are/have been your greatest rewards or successes? What does it mean to be in this team?

If you don’t know how to respond say something like “that must’ve been incredibly hard. I can’t imagine how I feel in that situation”

If you want more information say something like: “it sounds like you’ve experienced something that nobody should have experienced can you help me understand how that’s impacting you now”?

Resource Guides

- Report and recommendations on workplace support for midwives experiencing domestic abuse.
- Resource pack to support workplace compassion
- Support guide towards commissioning for workplace compassion
- Royal College of Midwives equality and diversity report on work-related stress.
- Maben, J. Taylor C. and Bridges, J. 2020. Guidance to support nurses’ psychological well-being during Covid-19 crisis. University of Surrey and the University of Southampton © Published online 14.4.20
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