Physician health and wellness: incorporating living from the heart into medical education

International Conference on Residency Education 2018

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Introduction

- Physician wellness is crucial for the sustainability of healthcare delivery and good patient outcomes.
- Physician burnout is common.

CMA National Physician Health Survey: A National Snapshot. October 2018
Our Initiative

Goal
To offer opportunity to explore the impact of working in a high turnover, high volume, acute care setting on our wellbeing and clinical practice

Setting the stage for discussion
• Creating a safe space
• A reading and sharing of narratives
• Prompting questions to start the conversation
Framework

• Collaboration with Spiritual Care

• Balint group style session
  • Sharing of narratives as a framework to address the emotional experience of the doctor-patient or doctor-workplace experience
  • Peer support and group reflection may help prevent compassion fatigue and burnout

Challenges

Practice setting
• Protecting time in a busy clinical environment

Trust and confidentiality
• Creating a safe space
Challenges

Physician facilitators

• Willingness to be vulnerable
• Sharing of narratives
• Feelings of being untrained

Learner participants

• “Recruitment” to attend - “Cardiac Care in GIM”

Spiritual Care Practitioner

• Protecting time of a limited resource
Outcomes

Third offering

• Replicated in other setting

Trainee feedback

• “Very important topic for trainees that is unfortunately often overlooked”
• “Very helpful for sharing stories and experiences from the ward”

Facilitator experience

• Highly rewarding
Outcomes

Why did it work?

- Breaking down hierarchy
- Normalization of experiences
- Sharing of experiences – learning from each other
- Acknowledging importance of our wellbeing
- Unique partnership with Spiritual Care
Cardiac Care in GIM

- Noon Rounds
Hypothesis

Our training can affect how we might live from the heart and how we respond in our clinical work
Objectives

To offer an opportunity to explore the impact of working in a high turnover, high volume, acute care setting on our cardiac health and clinical practice
“My Grandfather’s Blessings: Stories of strength, refuge, and belonging”
By Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen

Excerpt “Living from the Heart”

Sharing Experiences
Comfort zone
Perhaps outside your comfort zone
Still a safe space

*Based on Senninger’s Learning Zone Model*
Group Activity

1. In what ways does medical training affect living from the heart? How does it affect the way we interact with patients, colleagues, and oneself?

2. What is the significance of living from the heart? Why is this important, or put another way, what is the cost of not paying attention to our cardiac response?

3. What is it that you can do to support living from the heart in your clinical/training setting? What would you need to support such initiatives? What challenges do you foresee?
Resources

• Provincial and local resources
• Provincial physician health programs
  • https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/provincial-physician-health-programs.aspx
• Resident organizations, university and institutional resources

Ontario
• 24-hour PARO Helpline
  • 1-866-HELP-DOC (1-866-435-7362)
• OMA Physician Health Program
  • Confidential help line: 1-800-851-6606
Thank you & Comments

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