From Conflict to Curiosity – A Framework for Promoting Interprofessional Collaboration

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Overview of Today’s Talk

1. Why?
   - Context of Healthcare Conflicts

2. What?
   - Conflict Narratives from 93 Healthcare Providers

3. How?
   - Towards a Culture of Safety
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Process of Positively Communicating and Coordinating Patient Care Tasks Among Interprofessional Providers

“the perception by the parties involved of differences, discrepancies and incompatible wishes”

COLLABORATION

- Promote Critical Thinking
- Seek Common Ground
- Strengthen Trust
- Improve Teamwork

CONFLICT
Unrecognized, Unaddressed and Unresolved Conflict Affects Individual Morale, Team Cohesion, and Culture of Safety. Ultimately, It Can Harm Patients...
Workplace Conflict

- Task: Disagreement over Policy, Standards, Protocols
- Relationship: Personality, Difference in Norms & Values

Significant Medical Error
Error led to Adverse Event
Named in Malpractice Claim

Conflict In Healthcare

The Joint Commission: Behaviors that Undermine a Culture of Safety
Sentinel Event Alert; Issue 40, July 9, 2008

- Overt Behaviors
  - Verbal Outbursts
  - Physical Threats

- Covert Behaviors
  - Refusal to Perform Tasks
  - Uncooperative Behaviors

- Intimidating Leadership Behaviors
  - Refusal to Answer Questions, Calls/Page
  - Impatience with Questions
  - Condescending Language, Voice Intonation
“Individual care providers who exhibit characteristics such as self-centeredness, immaturity, or defensiveness can be more prone to unprofessional behavior. They can lack interpersonal, coping or conflict management skills.”
American Nurses Association Position Statement on Incivility, Bullying, and Workplace Violence

Effective Date: July 22, 2015
Status: New Position Statement
Written By: Professional Issues Panel on Incivility, Bullying, and Workplace Violence
Adopted By: ANA Board of Directors
incivility takes the form of rude and discourteous actions, of gossiping and spreading rumors, and of refusing to assist a coworker…

Bullying is repeated, unwanted harmful actions intended to humiliate, offend, and cause distress in the recipient…

All of those are an affront to the dignity of a coworker and violate professional standards of respect.
Have You Ever Been Mistreated During Medical School Training?

(N=12,000 – 14,000)
Medical Student Graduation Questionnaire
Association of American Medical Colleges

Who Mistreated You During Training?

\[ (N = 12,000 - 14,000) \]

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When Focusing on the Patient is Complicated: Conflict Narratives from the Healthcare Frontline

(Conflict Resolution Quarter, March, 2016)

Funded by UW Medicine Patient Safety Innovation Programs (PSIP)
When Focusing on the Patient is Complicated: Conflict Narratives from the Healthcare Frontline

(Conflict Resolution Quarter, March, 2016)

Study Purpose: What are the main sources of healthcare conflict that arise during patient care?
93 Providers = 156 Stories

- MD/NP: n=40
- Nurse, Allied Health: n=33
- Leaders: n=13
- Patients: n=8
Participating Hospitals in Seattle

- Harborview Medical Center
- Northwest Hospital
- UW Med Center
Interview Questions

1. What type of conflict have you recently experienced and who was involved?

2. What contributed to the initial conflict?

3. What work patterns affected healthcare team?

4. How did or did not the conflict resolve?
Framework of Sources of Healthcare Conflict
Self Focus
Resource Depletion
Suboptimal Competence
Communication Breakdown
Dehumanization
Feeling Disempowered
Prior Relations
Complex Workflows
Resource Depletion
Breaking Norms

Individual
Interpersonal
Organization
**Definition:** Tensions between self-concern vs. other-orientation. It involves an individual choosing to look out for one’s own best interests over others’ interests.

“A surgical service jumps the queue by insisting that its patient takes priority over others. The rationale for trumping the case is not always grounded in the high-acuity nature of their patient. It is perceived that this card is used over and over again by certain medical teams and at some point it feels manipulative.”

(Hospital Leader)
Dehumanization

**Definition**: Individuals perceive a person as lacking humanness, such as ignoring a person’s individuality, and preventing others from showing compassion toward stigmatized individuals.

“A new nurse was taking care of me. A nurse supervisor walked in and criticized the nurse about what she was doing. Right in front of my family! We were so uncomfortable about the supervisor’s disrespectful manner. The new nurse looked horrified.” (Patient)
Feeling Disempowered

**Definition**: Acceptance and expectations by less powerful members that power is distributed unequally. Conflicts are triggered along the power gradient.

“I disagreed with a senior MD attending over a patient care plan. The senior attending made accusatory remarks and refused to make eye contact with me for a week. I decided not to confront him out of fear that the conflict may impact my academic career. The fear continued for a while.” (Physician)
**Definition:** Organizational structure including specialization of teams, tasks, hierarchies, objectives, procedures and resources.

“Over the night on the pain service, residents are not able to provide the care needed due to the high volume of calls they receive. The team is then there the next day and everyone is upset because they feel they had poor service overnight, which predisposes the conversation to go poorly. Both the patient and the staff are upset with the team.” (Nurse)
Consequences of Conflict

- Safety
- Satisfaction

- Career
- Relationship
- Morale/Satisfaction
- Performance
- Turnover
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1. Formal policies that specify the professional code of conduct?

2. Consequences for unprofessional conducts in your organization?

3. Established competencies for your leaders in communication, feedback giving/receiving skills, and management of conflict dynamics?

Entrenched Conflict at Workplaces: Promoting Patient Safety Using an Experiential Training Model

UW Medicine Patient Safety Innovations Program (PSIP)
Conflict Dialogue Training

1. Get Ready
2. Create Space
3. Do Work
4. Close & Affirm

Model
Conflict Dialogue Training

Participant

Actor

Facilitator
Pilot Data of Performance Comparison: Intervention (n=30) vs. Control (n=30)

Global Rating Checklist Score

Intervention vs. Control

P < 0.05

Intervention vs. Control

P < 0.05
Danke schön!

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