Leadership and Its Role in Infection Prevention

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Cleveland Clinic
Annual Dialysis Conference Symposium on Pediatric Dialysis
Sunday, March 4, 2018
2:00-2:30PM

U.S. Dialysis Facilities Do Not Reliably Follow Basic Infection Control

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The number of citations is increasing each year.

Traditional Approaches

- Policies and procedures
- Staff training and education
- Audit compliance
- Disciplinary action
- Plan of correction
- Employee termination

Plan
Do
Act
Study
Roles and Duties of the Medical Director

$494.250 Condition: Responsibilities of the dialysis facility medical director
- Patient care and outcomes
- Quality and safety

• Clinical scientist
• Peer and colleague
• Hospital staff member
• Liaison with larger organization and other medical directors

Sources: Medical Director Toolkit, Forum of ESRD Networks, 2012; Medicare ESRD Conditions for Coverage 2008

Types of team leaders

Designated—The person assigned to lead and organize a team, establish clear goals, and facilitate open communication and teamwork among team members.

Situational—Any team member who has the skills to manage the situation at hand.

Why Empowerment Fails

• People have to want more authority first
• Lack of clear hierarchy of authority causes confusion and uncertainty

Leadership in the Facility

§494.250 Condition: Responsibilities of the dialysis facility medical director
- Delivery of patient care
- Outcomes
- Quality and safety

Medical Director
- Designated Leader

Nurse Manager
- Situational Leader

Nephrologists
- Situational Leaders

APPs
- Situational Leaders

Nurses
- Situational Leaders

Technicians
- Situational Leaders

R&D & SW
- Situational Leaders

Key considerations for teams

• Most employees can do their jobs better than their bosses can
• Leaders have an obligation to enable followers to grow and develop
• Leaders should manage interactions (not actions) to maximize individual contributions to the group as a whole
• Without support of employees, no one can lead effectively

“The way we do things around here”
High Reliability = Culture of Safety

• Communication based on mutual trust
• Shared perception about importance of safety
• Confidence in preventive measures
• Shared commitment to end preventable infections and harm
• “Collective mindfulness”

Kligcr AS. CJASN 2015
AHRQ Website

Culture: What Dialysis Nurses Say

• “My doctors are just not engaged.”
• “I know I’m not supposed to hit a doctor, but they won’t use gloves.”
• “Why did Dr. Smith have to retire? He was so wonderful and loved. The new medical director is hardly there.”
• “I realized that I stopped talking a long time ago [about infection control]...I’m going to start up again.”

ESRD Network 5 Council Meeting October 10, 2017

Healthcare performance is impacted by environment

Team stability
Chaotic operations and work schedules

Valentine M. Improving on-the-fly teamwork in healthcare. HBR Dec 2016
Threats to Patient Safety

- Patient demands
- Management priorities
- Efficiency focus
- Mixed messages
- Time constraints
- Peer interactions

Undermining a Culture of Safety. Content last reviewed December 2014. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.


Why Dialysis Staff Breach Policies

- Many breaches are intentional violations
- Responses to stress
- Shortcuts to improve performance
- Absent of visible harm, acts become accepted
- Behavior migrates

Adapted from Amalberti, R. Qual Saf Health Care 2006.

Why Culture is So Powerful

- Culture represents group adaptations that have been validated and tacitly accepted
- Challenging culture provokes unconscious reactions by the group & individuals

Schein E, Organizational Culture and Leadership, 2017
Resistance to Change

- Denial
  - We don’t have an infection control problem
- Blaming or evading
  - Must be the hospital or the surgeon
- Maneuvering and bargaining
  - Why should I do all this? I don’t work for “them”
  - I’ll do it…but you’ll have to pay me extra

A system is not the sum of its parts
It is how these parts fit together

Russell Ackoff (1919-2009)
Professor Emeritus of Management Science
Wharton School
“Einstein of Problem Solving”

Systems Thinking

**Event Oriented Thinking**
- Thinks in straight lines
- Policies
  - A → Compliance → Infection Control → Training → B
- “Cause and Effect”
  - Looks at parts in isolation

**Systems Thinking**
- Thinks in loop structure
  - Infection Control
    - A → B
    - Leadership
  - Culture
    - D → E
    - Mental
  - Policies

“Dynamic Complexity”
- Looks at the whole and relationships
Mental Models Drive Behavior

Mental Models: Basic Infection Control

Different professions = Different mental models

- Technicians, nurses, doctors and management are all trained to think and communicate differently
- They focus and value different dimensions of coordination
- Even though roles are supposed to clarify, they rarely guarantee the right kind of teamwork across boundaries

Valentine M. Improving on-the-fly teamwork in healthcare. HBR Dec 2016


Source: Senge P. The Fifth Discipline 2006
Do Not Underestimate the Power of Vision

Vision: a better future where we are committed to patient safety
- Hand hygiene
- Surface cleaning
- Scrub the hub
- Learning from mistakes

Situational leadership in action

- Front-line caregivers have to explain goals to each other
- Nurses and technicians need to engage each other to work out details and overcome problems
- Work has to be framed with a larger (higher) goal in mind….THE VISION
- Efforts require self-initiative by individuals
- Hierarchy of authority must be respected and followed

Recap of Key Points

- Use systems thinking to align mental models about patient safety
- Focus less on compliance and more on addressing cultural factors
- Teach nephrologists and others how to be effective team leaders

Commitment to Ending Preventable Dialysis Infections