

# Improving the Well-being and Efficiency of Healthcare Professionals: Benefits of workplace wellness programs

Presented by:

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# Workplace demands and the healthcare provider

- ▶ Extensive scientific research has demonstrated the adverse impact of long work shifts, stress, and sleep deprivation on human performance.
- ▶ Many of the above are often experienced among those in the healthcare profession. Insufficient sleep and wellness impairs:
  - ▶ Vigilance
  - ▶ Memory
  - ▶ Reaction time
  - ▶ Decision-making capacity

Thereby increasing the likelihood of error.

# Improving wellness and efficiency of healthcare professionals

- ▶ Many (e.g., graduate medical education community, patient safety and advocacy groups, regulatory bodies) have increasingly begun to recognize:

**Hectic lifestyle + Demanding work environment = adverse affects on performance**

- ▶ There is a better understanding of the toll work demands, in combination with everyday experiences, can take on healthcare professionals.
  - ▶ Burnout
  - ▶ Careless error
  - ▶ Irritability
  - ▶ Health risks/Poor health condition

# Workplace wellness programs

- ▶ The RAND Corporation has defined workplace wellness programs as “employment based activity of employer sponsored benefit aimed at promoting health-related behaviors (primary prevention) and disease management (secondary prevention)” (McIntyre, Bagley, Frakt & Carroll, 2017)
- ▶ Historically workplace wellness programs conducted:
  - ▶ Health risk appraisals: regarding eating & exercise habits, smoking and stress
  - ▶ Biometric screenings: regarding medical conditions, vitals, body-mass index

# Workplace wellness programs

- ▶ Types of programs:
  - ▶ Disease Management - specific to employees coping with chronic conditions; diabetes, asthma, cardiac disease, etc.
  - ▶ Lifestyle Management\* - Aimed at preventing chronic diseases; focus nutrition, fitness, smoking cessation, weight management
- ▶ Companies may offer both types of programs or one without the other

\*tend to be more common

# Workplace wellness programs

- ▶ When originally instituted wellness programs tended to be mandatory
  - ▶ Although benefits were recognized, they were viewed as punitive
  - ▶ Health contingent, need to meet specified outcome to receive rewards
  - ▶ Results were not long lasting when coerced
- ▶ Voluntary programs are more effective at yielding improved health

# Alternative health strategies at the workplace: Improving body and mind

- ▶ Individuals incorporating stress management techniques into their lifestyles have proven to minimize occurrences which may hinder their performance
- ▶ Current trends acknowledge the benefits of alternative modes of intervention, such as yoga, and the utility of staff wellness programs to reduce stress and increase effectiveness in staff and direct care providers
- ▶ Alternative health strategies may include:
  - ▶ Stress Reduction Tools, Deep Breathing, Gentle Movement and Stretches, Mindfulness, Imagery and Deep Relaxation

# Organizational benefits of introducing staff wellness programs

- ▶ Chronic conditions impact employers directly and indirectly
  - ▶ Direct: Increased Financial Burden; higher health coverage costs
  - ▶ Indirect: Absenteeism and Presenteeism
- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (McIntyre, Bagley, Frakt & Carroll, 2017) finds a significant shift in the financial burden of chronic disease from the elderly to working age adults



# Organizational benefits of introducing staff wellness programs

- ▶ In addition, behavioral and environmental stressors can potentially impact the overall wellness and resiliency of the professional
- ▶ More and more Organizations recognize the importance of body and mind awareness and overall well-being in healthcare professionals as they relate to patient safety and organizational efficiency

# Organizational benefits of introducing staff wellness programs

- ▶ Financial and Cultural Benefits for the Organization:
  - ▶ Affordable Care Act (ACA) and CDC have provisions for financial support when companies promote wellness
  - ▶ Wellness programs reduce healthcare coverage costs incurred by personal and family health problems, e.g., smoking and obesity
  - ▶ Staff wellness programs have served to reduce stress and increase effectiveness in staff and direct care providers

# Organizational benefits of introducing staff wellness programs

- ▶ Financial and Cultural Benefits for the Organization:
  - ▶ Research suggests following participation in wellness programs healthcare professionals are more productive, creating a positive atmosphere thereby increasing efficiency in the workplace and reducing patient risk of harm, while increasing patient safety and levels of satisfaction.
  - ▶ Additionally, Patients perceptions of physicians' level of wellness impacts perceived level of care (Lemaire, Ewashina, Polachek, Dixit, Yiu, 2018).
    - ▶ View physicians as role models

# New York Presbyterian - Brooklyn Methodist Hospital (NYPBMH) Staff Wellness Program.

- ▶ NYPBMH Staff Wellness Program.
  - ▶ Comprised of Hatha Yoga Program, Aerobic/Cardio Fitness Classes, and Meditation sessions, in addition to nutrition and wellness seminars.
  - ▶ Classes offered to all employees. Participants consisted of Physicians, Nurses, Human Resources, Nutritionists, and Hospital Administrators among others.
  - ▶ Yielding benefits among healthcare professionals with regard to increased motivation and productivity, wellness and job performance.

# New York Presbyterian - Brooklyn Methodist Hospital (NYPBMH) Staff Wellness Program.

- ▶ An NYPBMH instructor found sessions inspired enthusiasm and mutual respect among the participants, which led to increased cooperation and improved employee morale.
- ▶ Consistent with the research NYPBMH participants were found to be happier, more productive, and utilized fewer sick days.

# New York Presbyterian - Brooklyn Methodist Hospital (NYPBMH) Staff Wellness Program.

- ▶ Participants commented on experiencing:
  - ▶ improved attitudes in the workplace, fewer headaches, increased vitality, reduced lethargy, muscle tension and mental irritability;
  - ▶ while improving attention span and motivation
  - ▶ carryover of positive habits into their personal lives, e.g., getting more sleep and dealing with challenges more effectively

# Discussion Questions



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