

Spreading the Word

Collaborative working; St Wilfrid's Hospice introduction of Schwartz Rounds into a local GP Practice.

St Wilfrid's Hospice on the sunshine coast of Eastbourne, has been running Schwartz rounds for several years now. We invite all staff and volunteers, and as such junior doctors have been attending during their placements at the hospice. Some of our most thought provoking and appreciated stories have been told by junior doctors. Our links with these doctors continues when they move on and through this, and our regular strong GP interaction, we were asked to facilitate a wellbeing afternoon in one of our local surgeries.

To plan the event we met with the GP trainee and her trainer and brainstormed what to include. The result was a mixture of mindfulness, dealing with loss, group work on maintaining personal wellbeing and a Schwartz Round. The GP trainee approached people to be story tellers and one included another doctor who had been a story teller at a hospice Schwartz Round.

Organising the preparation meeting was a challenge, which was overcome with the help of telephone and facetime conversations. On the day it was quite daunting as a facilitator to be in an unfamiliar environment, not knowing the staff, and trying to assess the mood and aid the discussion flow. It was great to have the help of our Medical Director as the co-facilitator. The following extract was written by the GP trainee we worked with.

'Following a survey conducted amongst all clinical and non-clinical staff within the practice, we found approximately 50% were experiencing moderate personal burnout and over 50% were suffering with work related burnout (using the Copenhagen inventory scale for burnout). As a means to try to improve the overall wellbeing of the staff, we organised a practice development afternoon focused on health, wellbeing and self-care, with a session dedicated to running a primary care Schwartz round.

'We enlisted the guidance and support of the local hospice team who we have a close affiliation with and who could facilitate the session. We chose a theme of "a day I will never forget" and identified three speakers from the multidisciplinary team.

'One spoke of an experience of feeling personally judged by appearance rather than professional knowledge, another of the pressure of "going live" with a new computer system and the third of how the death of a patient had been a reminder of family member's death and the emotion this had provoked.

'Following the three stories, a moment of silence was provided to allow the rest of the room to reflect on what they had heard, and how it made them feel. The facilitators from the hospice guided the conversation, pointing out specific themes from the comments made, provoking further, more in depth thought.

'The feedback following the Schwartz round was incredibly positive, with 100% of attendees scoring the session as 'excellent' and many feeling it was relevant to them personally. Given this, we are in the process of developing a regular Schwartz round as part of our teaching programme involving all staff members.'

Overall we felt it was a very worthwhile experience in sharing the benefits of Schwartz Rounds with our community colleagues.



St Wilfrid's Hospice

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