Sustainability for Schwartz Communities

This document outlines practical suggestions for the Schwartz Community regarding the sustainability of the Rounds. Feedback from sites suggests that whilst there is much support and enthusiasm during the start-up phase, in the long term the sustainability of the Rounds can become difficult. Often this is related to resource and the ongoing commitment need to successfully embed Rounds in an organisation.

Problems	Possible solutions

A lack of support from the organisation	• Keep a record of attendance rates, and feedback from attendees and panellists. Provide the Board with an annual report on the Rounds highlighting successes, organisational impact and the resources needed for continued success. If possible, supplement this with a presentation to the Board that includes Round stories related to organisational priorities.
	
	• Hold an annual focus group formed of: steering group members, the previous year's panellists and other interested stakeholders, to explore perceived benefits of the Rounds. Discuss the organisational themes and issues raised, identify topics, panellists and new champions for the coming year. Write up this meeting with quotes to present at a senior management meeting/Board.
	
	• Look into the governance arrangements for Schwartz Rounds. Suggest that the Rounds be overseen by a committee that is ultimately answerable to the Board. If support for the Rounds is floundering the respective committee will have leverage with senior management to put in place more top level support. The committee should be mindful of the pledged resource support made to the POCF from the CEO at the onset of the Rounds. Committee structures vary between trusts, the most appropriate committee to oversee the Rounds will have responsibility for staff welfare/support/engagement and may include:
	
	   o workforce committee
	   o quality and engagement committee
	   o quality safety and performance
	
	• Ask senior staff members to sit on the panel.
	
	• Liaise with Point of Care to leverage organisational support, for example they can provide a letter to the CEO outlining the contractual obligations of the Board and the resource needed to run effective Rounds.
	
	• Consider a re-launch of the Rounds if organisational support has completely fallen flat.

A lack of practical input from the steering group	• Try refreshing your steering group by:
	
	   o having a rolling group, whereby members commit for certain amounts of time rather than indefinitely.
	   o ask members to always nominate a representative when they cannot attend meetings.

	- clarify clear roles for steering group members and allocate members of group specific tasks, e.g. finding stories or engaging particular staff groups. - get more junior staff members on the group. - in more serious cases, for example, when your group has disbanded, you may want to recruit a new steering group. When you re-recruit select people who can commit time-wise and who will help you will difficulties encountered. For example, if you have experienced difficulties with recruitment, ask someone from the communications departments to get involved. - once Rounds are up and running you may be able to meet less frequently, quarterly meetings may suffice. - ensure good minutes are taken of each minutes with clear timed follow up actions and circulated to all members whether in attendance or not. • Ask your mentor to attend a steering group meeting and to present the national picture with regard to Schwartz Rounds.
The time commitment involved in running rounds	• With a supportive steering group and administrative support, the facilitator and clinical lead should be able to focus on preparing panel and the facilitation itself. If you are expected to do Schwartz Rounds on top of your existing work, it might be worth trying to get time written into your job description. The Point of Care Foundation can support you by confirming the estimated amount of time the various roles take. • You could try running nine Rounds per year instead of 12 to ease pressure. • You could try having three panellists rather than four. • Bring new people into these roles when necessary to avoid tiredness and if possible, evaluate whether the right people are in these roles if time commitment appears too burdensome.
No administrative support	• Having an administrator is an important part of the Schwartz model and Rounds are unlikely to run smoothly without administrative support. Finding an administrator who will take ownership of the Rounds is crucial for sustainability. Just as for the facilitator role, it may help to have a time allocation for Schwartz Rounds as a formal part of the administrator job description. • Involve your administrator as an early member of a panel – people who have done this find that the administrator feels much more ownership and commitment to the role. • Making the administration role more varied can help with engagement and recruitment to the role, e.g. producing Schwartz Rounds reports and being involved in the communications and advertising of the Rounds. • A standard letter of support from the Point of Care can be written on request, which outlines the requirement for administration.
Facilitators or clinical leads leaving their positions	• Create a larger pool of facilitators and clinical leads. • Arrange a comprehensive handover and ensure the new facilitator has a chance to co-facilitate before the previous facilitator leaves.
Difficulty recruiting panellists	• Plan out a Rounds programme for the year to allow time for story collection and to approach people well in advance.

	• Delegate each calendar month to one speciality e.g. cardiology or oncology, with a member of the steering group given responsibility to identify a case from that speciality.
	• Have a 'back-up' Round if possible, where members of the steering group may be willing to present on a successful topic, e.g. the patient I'll never forget.
	• Have future topics as a standard agenda steering group item and regularly review current organisational issues and well known cases within the organisation to help identify future topics.
	• Use members of the senior management team as panellists – this may give licence to others to follow suit.
	• Within Rounds, note when audience members' contributions suggest they may have a story to tell and approach them afterward. You can also ask for offers of stories at the end of each Round.
	• Provide a briefing note for panellists so they understand what they are being asked to do and appreciate that it will not take too much time.
	• Create a pool of panel champions – previous panellists who are prepared to speak to prospective panellists about the experience. Most panellists find it an extremely worthwhile experience (often despite reservations) and can be the best people to encourage reluctant panellists.
	• Sometimes you can ask previous panellists to come back to present a different story.
Difficulty recruiting audience members	• If possible, get Rounds CPD accredited as this can be an incentive.
	• Ask the communications team to add Schwartz Rounds to the weekly message from CEO or other internal communications.
	• More communications tips can be found here:
	http://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/Caches/Files/HB4OrgansingASchwartzRound.pdf
	• Ensure that there is clarity and commitment from managers to allow staff to attend in work time. This may need to be formally articulated somewhere. If there is resistance it may be an issue that is taken to the committee responsible for overseeing the Rounds or to a member of senior management.
	• If staff have to travel to attend Rounds clarify whether travel costs are covered by the trust and how these are reimbursed.
	• On busy wards where it is particularly hard to release staff to attend perhaps a rota system can be introduced where a small number of staff are encouraged to attend each month. Conduct 'mini-Rounds' in order to give these groups a taste of what Schwartz Rounds.
	• Vary the time of the Rounds. Some sites have tried breakfast or tea time Rounds, where you can also provide sustenance.
	• It is important to monitor the range of professional groups attending – you can do this from the feedback forms and the data should be considered regularly by the steering group. Compare the groups attending against a map of all professional groups across the organisation. If there are noticeable gaps in attendance consider presenting at the relevant team/division meeting or

	recruiting a senior manager from that section of the organisations on to the steering group.
	• Consider holding demonstration Rounds with an invited audience made of staff groups who are proving particularly difficult to get along – this may include both clinicians and non-clinicians.
	• Ask steering group members to do brief presentations on Schwartz rounds at meetings they regularly attend.
	• Review Schwartz topics to extend their breadth, depth and reach into the organisation.
	• Identify panellists who will bring their friends into the audience and raise curiosity and interest in the Rounds.
Logistics of running Rounds over large regions	• If multi-site, embed Rounds in one site first before rolling out to more sites. It is important to begin to build an organisational understanding for what the Rounds are about before spreading out to other sites.
	• Consider holding occasional panels in more remote areas. It may be worth familiarising staff with the type of conversations that Schwartz Rounds encourage.
	• Ideally try to select venues with which staff are already familiar.
	• Repeat the same panellists at two sites if they are willing. This will reduce your workload identifying and preparing panellists.
	• In the UK we are not aware of any organisations who have used videoconferencing. Generally this is not recommended, but if you are considering this the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare in Boston suggest that you:
	o Only use live conferencing, no recordings should be made
	o Test your technology well
	o Take into consideration the additional anxiety that might be evoked by panellists not being able to see some audience members. Two-way video-conferencing would be better
	o Allow remote audience to contribute to discussion
	o The same rules apply to remote participants, e.g. ground rules confidentiality, evaluation
	o Trial the technology and review, before committing long term