Creating a Relational Playbook for Cardiology Teams to Enhance Employee Well-Being and Veteran Care

Gilmartin, H., Connelly, B., Hess, E., Mueller, C., Plomondon, M., Waldo, S., Battaglia, C.
Denver/Seattle Center of Innovation, VA Clinical Assessment Reporting & Tracking Program

Objectives

- The VA is shifting to become a learning health system and high reliability organization (LHS-HRO)

Supportive learning environments are fundamental to LHS-HROs – they empower teams to trial, adapt, and adopt innovations while using highly reliable practices (e.g., debriefs) to ensure patient safety

Research gap: It is unknown if supportive learning environments exist in the VA and what strategies create this environment within clinical teams

Objective: To identify supportive learning environments, learn how they are created, and the impact on staff engagement, retention, and safety climate.

Goal: Create user-friendly training tools to spread LHS-HRO best practices across clinical settings.

Methods

- Survey: The Learning Environment Survey was administered to staff at the 81 VA Cardiac Catheterization Labs in 2018 and 2020

- Modeling: Linear regression and Bayesian models:
  - Ranked high, mid, and low cath labs
  - Identified relationships between learning environments and employee engagement, retention, and safety climate

- Interviews: Management and staff from high and mid-ranking cath labs were asked about LHS-HRO best practices

- Literature review: Positive psychology, appreciative inquiry, servant leadership, relational coordination, teamwork, VA Whole Health & Clinical Team Training

- Relational Playbook: Designed as single source for LHS-HRO best practices used by cath labs and supported in the literature

- Expert Review Panel: Rate acceptability, appropriateness & feasibility of Playbook

Survey: The 2018 (n=296) and 2020 (n=231) surveys identified national and cath lab level variation in learning environments.

Modeling: Supportive learning environments were associated with higher employee engagement, retention, and safety climate

Interviews: (n:13) LHS-HRO best practices to build supportive learning environment include:
  - Create a positive culture
  - Purposely build a team
  - Lead the team
  - Create joy in work
  - Communicate effectively and use high reliability practices

Relational Playbook for Cardiology Teams: 5-chapter eBook with resources and 50 research-based practices for managers, educators & staff to integrate into existing trainings or meetings
  - Gratitude practices
  - Walk in my shoes exercise
  - Humble inquiry questions
  - Active listening approach

Expert Review Panel Ratings: High acceptability (4.37/5), appropriateness (4.28/5) and feasibility (3.94/5)

Discussion

The Relational Playbook contributes to the VA’s LHS-HRO journey by providing clinical teams with simple, research-based practices to change their culture toward learning and high reliability.

The Playbook practices can enhance employee well-being, retention, and Veteran safety.

To learn more about Playbook implementation scan QR code or contact Dr. Gilmartin @ Heather.Gilmartin@va.gov

Heather Gilmartin, PhD, NP: Dr. Gilmartin is supported by a VA Career Development Award. The views of this poster are the authors’ own and do not reflect those of the Department of Veterans Affairs.