

HUMANISM ROUNDS, A PILOT STUDY: DECREASING RESIDENT BURNOUT THROUGH STRENGTHENED HUMAN CONNECTION

Lead Author: Reina Styskel, MD

Contributing Authors: Brett Styskel, MD, Reina Styskel, MD, Jeffery Aldrich, MD, Mahmoud Allahham, MD, Kati Choi, MD, Kevin Ting, MD, Zach Yeung, MD, Cece Sun, MD, Lubna Khawaja, MD, Sabina Lee, MD, Anoop Agrawal, MD, Stacey Rose, MD

Category: Quality, Cost, Value

Background

Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased sense of personal achievement, affecting up to 76% of residents. Burnout decreases resident's physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing and ability to provide effective patient care. Physicians experiencing burnout report more medical errors, and worse patient outcomes.

The ACGME "Back to Bedside" initiative called for innovative, resident driven projects across all specialties countrywide, with the goal of decreasing resident burnout. Our project was selected for this initiative. "Humanism Rounds" (HR) involves creating protected time while on inpatient medicine teams for trainees to spend time connecting with patients at the bedside. We hope to restore meaning back to the day to day work of residents through increasing humanistic interactions between trainees and patients. To our knowledge, there is the first innovation of its kind.

Objectives

The objective of our intervention is to increase resident perception of meaning in day to day work and decrease burnout by creating protected time for residents to connect with patients during inpatient medicine rotations.

Methods

Trainees were given a brief introduction to the intervention. Patient care was covered by another physician while team members participated in the intervention. Residents went to the bedside of a selected patient on their inpatient team for 30 minutes. Suggested interview questions were provided however residents were free to converse with their patient in whatever way they felt meaningful and natural. Surveys were administered pre-intervention and post-intervention.

Results

Of residents in our study, 90% (n = 9 of 10) of residents strongly agreed that HR made their day to day work feel more meaningful. Post-intervention all of the residents agreed (70%) or strongly agreed (30%) that they felt like they connected well with their patients. There was trend toward increasing feelings of connection with patients (3.8/5 to 4.3/5) and decreasing burnout (2.7/5 to 2.4/5). The majority of residents (70%) did not think the intervention took too much time away from patient care or clinical duties.

Discussion

After the pilot stage, Humanism Rounds shows great potential for decreasing burnout by increasing resident meaning and fulfillment in work and increasing resident's connection with patients. Residents enjoyed participating in the intervention and reported minimal time burden.