Professional Resilience In The Healthcare

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Introduction

Healthcare professionals can be influenced by several stressors such as workload, emotional issues, time pressures, and having multiple roles which disturb their physical and mental health. These stressors often emerge from the prevailing work environment conditions and can lead to burnout and other traumatic stress-like symptoms (McCann et al., 2013). And once the well-being of health professionals is damaged, the effectiveness of the whole healthcare system also decreases. Therefore, it becomes highly important that healthcare organizations and healthcare staff adopt strategies and techniques to prevent such situations.

In this regard, according to McCann et al. (2013), developing and improving resilient individuals and environments in the health and social care industry is an effective and efficient way to increase the positive response of healthcare professionals toward stressful situations. Robertson et al. (2016) defined resilience as a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity. Thus, considering the importance of a resilient workforce, the following essay discusses the various theories and strategies that can be potentially implemented to develop a resilient workforce and help healthcare individuals face different challenges which frequently occur while dealing with patients and other staff members.

Resilience In The HealthCare Workplace

Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare staff have to face many demanding situations at the workplace, which makes resilience an essential component of their personalities to cope with them effectively. By developing a resilient personality, they cannot only deal with such stressful situations but can also find them as an opportunity for their personal growth. However, this cannot be achieved by promoting an equally resilient workplace environment. According to Robertson et al. (2016), there are several key challenges that can emerge from different healthcare settings and often become a threat to the productivity of healthcare professionals, resulting in their burnout. These challenges can arise from conflicts with the patients or other difficult clinical issues (Robertson et al., 2016). Also, the challenges can be referred to as specific organizational issues such as administrative factors, personal relationships, in-house communication, etc.

Some challenges are external as well in their nature, such as the quality frameworks that implement increased scrutiny of practices. However, as explained earlier, individuals with a certain set of skills can find better ways to deal with challenges. For instance, as noted by McCray et al. (2016), individuals who have mental, social, and physical resources to help them make effective decisions are

less prone to the effects of burnout. Therefore, Robertson et al. (2016) emphasized the implementation of specialized training programs in all medical schools to promote resilience in medical students even before they start their practical careers. It is also important to note that resilience is now widely considered an important attribute of competent healthcare professionals.

In the following sections, the main strategies that can be used to develop a resilient personality among healthcare professionals are discussed. As noted by Rieckert et al. (2021), the important feature of the resilient workforce is strong intercommunication, where each staff member is held responsible for sharing the necessary information time, which can be potentially used to cope with any challenging situation. This means that a strong communication channel needs to be implemented at the organisational, environmental and individual levels. Also, healthcare professionals should provide the necessary psychosocial support and treatment at the organizational level. Such multidisciplinary psychosocial support can be provided by peers, social professionals, spiritual counsellors and occupational health and safety physicians. In this regard, Rickert et al. (2021) further recommended that a simple and agile organizational structure should be created consisting of clear hierarchical management and communication at all levels of the organization.

Moreover, when professionals suffer from acute situations, evidence-based interventions need to be conducted to diagnose their specific issues and treat them accordingly. The hospital can also provide opportunities for professionals to withdraw from a certain stressful situation and catch their breath, get peer support, and stay in contact with their friends and family. Furthermore, an effective monitoring system aware of the physical and mental health of professionals should be implemented.

Also, some work environment conditions help professionals to improve their response to specific challenges. For example, as noted by Rieckert et al. (2021), organizations should maintain a healthy care provider-patient ratio to distribute the workload equally among healthcare professionals. It also improves the safety and quality of health and social care. Similarly, work patterns also have a great impact on the mental satisfaction and health of professionals. Therefore, it is recommended to limit the shifts to 12 hours in case of intense tasks and 8-10 hours in case of light tasks. Such shifts should also be followed with the day-offs and breaks.

The atmosphere of the health departments can also be made collaborative by promoting a team-building culture where everyone feels confident and satisfied to share their opinions. Similarly, it is important that their autonomy is respected and they are provided choices to work according to their comfort. Hospital management should also provide resting facilities for healthcare professionals. They should also be provided with the necessary compensation for their extraordinary tasks, risks, and responsibilities, along with ensuring that they have a good living environment at home whenever they are engaged in-home care. Lastly, the accessibility of high-nutritional food and drinks should also be ensured so that they can maintain their physical health and thus perform their jobs efficiently.

Conclusion

There are many factors in the different healthcare settings that can directly or indirectly impact the mental and physical health of health and social care professionals, and thus, they need to be properly addressed to prevent their adverse impacts. All these factors collectively influence professional resilience, and as indicated, they can emerge at both individual and organizational levels. In light of the different challenges that this healthcare professional faces, it is recommended that to prevent burnout, the workload should be kept to a minimum, along with controlling the schedules. The professional's sense of autonomy should be maintained while they are engaged with the hospital management. There are many similar strategies, but to integrate all of them, strong support from the healthcare sector management is needed.

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