Schwartz Center Rounds®: Strengthening the Patient-Caregiver Relationship and Improving Teamwork

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Cook Children’s Health Care System
Participants will be able to:

- Recognize the importance of the employee/caregiver experience as it relates to patient experience
- Appreciate the impact of discussing social-emotional challenges that arise in healthcare
- Understand the Schwartz Center Rounds as a proven replicable educational program to improve compassionate care and support staff wellbeing
The Patient - Ken Schwartz

- 40-year-old father and husband from Boston, MA
- Diagnosed with lung cancer, healthy, non-smoker
- Died in September, 1995
“A Patient’s Story”

• Published in *Boston Globe Magazine* July, 1995
• Ken believed that his care represented the best that the system could offer: caregivers that are
  – Compassionate
  – Engaged
  – Willing and able to spend the necessary time
• All patients should get the same quality of care
• Financial pressures may take the humanity and empathy out of health care
Growth of Schwartz Center

• Founded in 1995
• Now a national non-profit
• Dedicated to strengthening the relationship between patients and professional caregivers
• Preserving the human connection in healthcare
• Housed at Massachusetts General Hospital
• Created several programs – Schwartz Center Rounds® is largest
• Thought leadership activities
What is Compassionate Care?

At its core.... recognizing the concerns, distress and suffering of patients and their families and taking action to relieve them.

It is based on active listening, empathy, strong communication and interpersonal skills, knowledge of the patient as a whole person including his or her life context and perspective, and the ability to work together to address concerns and relieve distress.

Lown, Rosen, Marttila, *Health Affairs*, September 2011
More than 80% of recently hospitalized patients said compassionate care is very important to medical treatment and can make a life-or-death difference
Successful organizations understand that employee experience drives patient experience and compassionate care.

Believe that supporting caregivers is essential to preserving compassion.

Incorporate compassionate care practice into patient experiences initiatives.
Successful organizations understand that employee experience drives patient experience and compassionate care. They believe that supporting caregivers is essential to preserving compassion. They incorporate compassionate care practice into patient experiences initiatives.
Schwartz Center Rounds

- Multidisciplinary forum
- Addresses the emotional and social challenges inherent in patient care
- Explores the role that teamwork and communication play in improving quality
- Based on specific patient case / topic identified

Schwartz Center Rounds session at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, Cambridge, MA
Now offered in more than 350 sites in the US and Canada, plus 100 in UK, as of 3/15
Evaluation Results

Participants report:

- **New ideas and strategies** for challenging patient situations – 87%
- **More compassion** for patients and families – 84%
Impact on Teamwork

- Increased **appreciation** for the roles/contributions of colleagues from other disciplines – 93%
- Increased **sense of belonging** to a caregiving team – 88%

Schwartz Center Rounds session at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, Cambridge, MA

Lown, BA, Manning, CF. Academic Medicine, 2010
Institutional Benefits

- Caregivers reported feeling less stressed and better able to cope with the emotional demands of clinical work.

- Approximately 50% reported changes in practices or policies within the department or hospital at large.
Cook Children’s Health Care System: One million patient encounters each year

First Texas Pediatric Health Care System to implement Schwartz Center Rounds

Nearly a century ago, the first children’s hospital in Fort Worth opened with 30 beds and a promise to provide every child in the area access to medical care. From these humble beginnings Cook Children’s has grown to become one of the largest and most recognized freestanding children’s health care systems in the southwest. But one thing remains the same: the promise we made long ago, and intend to keep for generations to come.
“Exhaustion is nothing new in the world of nursing, but the emotional and physical toll of doling out high levels of empathy must be addressed by leaders who have the power to make positive changes.”

Alexandra Wilson Peck
Motivating Factors

• Prevent Compassion Fatigue and Burnout
• Create an environment and culture that values and fosters self care as a model
• Supported employees provide better patient care and outcomes
Why we Choose to Participate

• To foster an environment of support for staff by creating a safe and sacred space to discuss challenging experiences in caregiving
• Create a forum to acknowledge the depth of emotional impact on staff
• Validation of employees experience, dedication, and hard work
• Address emotional challenges unique to pediatric health care
“The Schwartz Center Rounds gave me an opportunity to openly express my grief, as well as my satisfaction for the care we provided. The emotional scars are almost as strong as they were several years ago. While discussing this situation, it reminded me how we go to the edges of modern medicine. I am so proud of our physicians and all the caregivers for willing to fight for this patient and go to unchartered grounds for Cook Children’s. I am blessed to have been able to care for this patient and I would DEFINITELY do it all over again, without hesitation.”

Ginger Brewer, RN
Benefits and Changes

- Has created a connection between interdisciplinary teams
- Provides an emotional outlet and support
- Improved interdisciplinary communication and appreciation
- Staff and physicians are more confident and comfortable verbalizing thoughts and feelings about challenging cases
Schwartz Center Rounds Titles

- “The Gift of Chaos”
- “When the Dead are Helping the Living”
- “Happy Campers”
- “Workplace Violence: When Grief Turns Violent”
- “When a Patient’s Care Impedes Healing”
Staffing the Program

- Physician Leader
- Facilitator
- Administrative Coordinator
- Planning Committee

* CME’s & CEU’s by Educational Services
Cook Children’s Schwartz Center Rounds

“Life flows as effortlessly as a wave when we are in sync with what’s going on around us.” Milton Willis