Improving Staff Well-being on a Telemetry Unit

BACKGROUND

• Job stress and musculoskeletal injuries were reported as the top two health and safety concerns for nurses in 2016 (ANA, 2014).
• Nurses and caregivers are prone to occupational injuries due to repetitive lifting/moving and performing tasks that require biomechanically stressful body positioning (Nelson, 2007).
• Evidence supports utilizing strengthening/stretching measures to prevent injuries to reduce stress and emotional exhaustion, and to improve self-care (Heiden et al., 2013).

PURPOSE

• To improve overall levels of well-being in staff who work on a telemetry unit with education focused on preventing injuries, strengthening and stretching, and decreasing stress on both mind and body.

METHODS

• 8-week program - series of charge nurse-led stretches and strengthening techniques, and weekly wellness topics.
• Resource binder and videos to assist charge nurses in leading the daily exercises.
• Demographics, Professional Quality of Life Scale (PRO-QOL) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) revised version (1988) emailed to staff pre and post intervention.
• 40 participants, 93% female, 88% RNs

Examples of topics:
Week 1: Yoga and Mindfulness
Week 2: The Spine
Week 3: Chest and Upper Extremities
Week 4: Upper Extremity Strengthening
Week 5: Hips
Week 6: Neck and Shoulders
Week 7: Foot and Lower Leg
Week 8: Knees

Mindfulness/Wellness tips:
• Set a date with yourself for some “alone time” to reboot and revitalize from today’s busy world.
• Practice noticing the positive things in your life.
• Nurses should increase flexibility and strength in the back and areas around the back in order to prevent injuries; if stretching is done consistently it can reduce chronic back pain.
• Flexibility is a crucial part of preventing injuries.

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

PRO-QOL Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre N = 80</th>
<th>Post N = 26</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I think I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I provide care”</td>
<td>1.05 (.9)</td>
<td>.65 (.69)</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have happy thoughts about those I provide care for and how I can help them”</td>
<td>2.83 (.75)</td>
<td>3.27 (.79)</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel overwhelmed because my case work load seems endless”</td>
<td>2.23 (1.07)</td>
<td>1.46 (.76)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Healthy Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre N = 40</th>
<th>Post N=26</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you practice meditation or mindfulness activities at least once per week?</td>
<td>35% (14)</td>
<td>65% (26)</td>
<td>.692 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you use massage techniques at least once per week?</td>
<td>17.5% (7)</td>
<td>82.5% (33)</td>
<td>50% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you exercise or stretch for at least 10-15 minutes at least once per week?</td>
<td>72.5% (29)</td>
<td>27.5% (11)</td>
<td>88.5% (23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Significant increases found in healthy behaviors reported (e.g. use of massage, exercise) as well as reductions in stress and overall satisfaction with the work environment.
• Staff reported the following:
  ✓ “…stretches helped reset my brain and I felt relaxed.”
  ✓ “I now do the stretches daily before work on my own.”
  ✓ “When I feel tight, I stop and do stretches in a quiet place and I feel better.”
  ✓ “As a secretary, my shoulder hurt from repetitively reaching to answer the phone—I still use the stretches/tennis balls to this day.”

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

• Caregivers can benefit from tools to maintain well-being due to the stress of their jobs.
• Look into implementing a well-being program in a larger area of the hospital.

REFERENCES

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