Whole team training

At AfPP we are passionate about patient safety and work hard to support our members with their personal development. However, as an Association we are keen to support whole teams to ensure a full understanding of where processes start and finish and why they may fail due to poor communication, poor policies or standards.

AfPP believe that teams who work together benefit from training together. It helps to build an environment of support and trust, one that supports the common guidelines to ensure there is a robust safety culture embedded into departmental practices.

With headlines such as ‘£2m pay outs in compensation for botched operations by a Yorkshire Surgeon’ it is obvious that some trusts are failing to educate or support their teams and develop environments that are ‘safe’ not only from a patient perspective but also from an employee perspective.

Team members need to know that they are able to ‘speak up and speak out’ if things are not going according to plan. They need to feel secure in the knowledge that they will not be reprimanded for raising issues relating to poor practice.

The cost of investigating incidents of poor practice is high for any trust and the ongoing resource required to support their teams following the outcomes can be overwhelming. There is no monetary figure that can be put on the trauma experienced by the patients on the receiving end of any ‘botched operation’ or never event; or the clinician/team who failed in their delivery of care.

Never events are things that should never happen. Sadly, however, they do because it is impossible, when humans work together, to stop human error but an environment can be developed which offers support to deal with issues as they arise thus reducing the potential for them to proliferate with more serious consequences.

AfPP have developed a curriculum of learning to include non-technical skills, communications accountability and responsibility sessions. The classroom learning is supported by scenario sessions. A bespoke curriculum can be developed to support the issues faced at a particular trust.

The spot light is always on healthcare, more so at present with the publication of the Mid Staffordshire Inquiry. The five key issues which were highlighted within the report were:

1. Culture, care, compassion
2. Leadership
3. Candour, openness and transparency
4. Patient voice
5. Enhancing standards

The programme of learning we have developed strongly supports the Francis Report (2013) as it states:

‘In nurse training, education and professional development, there should be an increased focus on the practical as well as the theoretical requirements of delivering compassionate care.’

It goes on to encourage the introduction of aptitude tests; working towards a common qualification, assessment or examination; ensuring newly qualified nurses are competent to deliver a consistent standard in the fundamental aspects of compassionate care; all nurses to demonstrate their knowledge of nursing practice; training and continual professional development should include leadership training.

With the changes the NHS is currently experiencing due to a savings target of £20bn by 2014, training can often be forgotten or ignored to save money. However, the NHS constitution states:

‘The NHS commits to provide all staff with personal development, access to appropriate training for their jobs and line management support to succeed’ (NHS Constitution 2012 p10).

The cost involved in a dedicated programme of education compared with the costs of investigation and paying compensation for an incident is very favourable and will in turn change the conditions within which professionals work to make the incidents of poor practice less likely.

Surely it would be advantageous for clinical institutions to use their budgets on training rather than paying out compensation for incidents that could well have been avoided.

Following the delivery of whole team training at a trust in the Midlands a case study has been developed that can be viewed on our website at www.afpp.org.uk/events. It was evident that common guidelines were in place but there wasn’t a robust safety culture in place which was embedded into the practices of the team. Following the training the CQC made an unannounced follow up visit and they said:

‘It felt like a different organisation, particularly in theatres’

There is a clear need to get the focus back into patient care and overcome the challenges to the motivation of healthcare workers brought about by working in an understaffed, target driven environment. AfPP’s vision to ‘lead perioperative excellence’ continues to be our main focus as this will in turn support patient safety and clinical outcomes.

For more details about our training packages please visit www.afpp.org.uk or contact Pauline Thompson on 01423 882969 or by email pauline.thompson@afpp.org.uk

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References


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