

ENCOURAGING STAFF WELLNESS IN TRAUMA-INFORMED ORGANIZATIONS

As health care provider organizations move toward becoming trauma-informed, ensuring emotional wellness among professional and non-professional staff is a crucial requirement for providing high-quality care.



CHRONIC EMOTIONAL STRESS IN HEALTH CARE STAFF...

- ➔ **SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS**, also known as compassion fatigue, is emotional duress that mimics post-traumatic stress disorder caused by hearing about another person's firsthand traumatic experiences.
- ➔ **VICARIOUS TRAUMATIZATION** is the cumulative effect of consistent exposure to hearing about other people's traumatic experiences.
- ➔ Indirect exposure to trauma can contribute to **BURNOUT**, a form of physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion caused by chronic work-related stress.

SYMPTOMS OF CHRONIC EMOTIONAL STRESS

Guilt, social withdrawal, anger, cynicism, chronic exhaustion, physical illness, inability to listen, and loss of creativity.



↓ CAN LEAD TO ↓



NEGATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES...

POOR PATIENT CARE

Staff experiencing chronic emotional stress may not have the emotional resources to provide high-quality care and the resulting poor care may contribute to patients' re-traumatization.

HIGH STAFF TURNOVER

Staff who experience chronic emotional stress are more likely to leave the organization, which can cause dissatisfaction among other employees. Replacing staff is expensive and time-consuming.

↓ MAY BE ADDRESSED WITH ↓

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING STAFF WELLNESS



Encourage and incentivize self-care activities like counseling, meditation, exercise, and healthy eating.



Foster a culture that encourages staff to seek support, keeps caseloads manageable, and provides sufficient mental health and paid time off benefits.



Provide trainings that create awareness of chronic emotional stress and the importance of self-care.



Implement reflective supervision, during which time health care professionals and their supervisors meet to address feelings about patient interactions.