

Staff Wellbeing

Authors

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Introduction

This section defines the expectations of individuals, departments, and organisations to maximise the wellbeing of ED staff.

Standards

1. Organisations must promote rest for ED staff while on shift, including the facility to sleep post-nights and take power naps during the shifts.
2. All staff working in emergency departments must have 24/7 access to basic food provision and healthy hot food and provide clearly rostered breaks that comply with rest/break entitlements.
3. When designing rotas, explicitly consider published guidance such as the RCEM EM-POWER guideline¹ and the Good Rostering Guide².
4. The ED must always have adequate staffing numbers and should adhere to the relevant RCEM workforce recommendations^{3,4}.
5. Every ED must have a dedicated Wellbeing Lead (supported by a team) who should be accessible and proactive.
6. ED clinicians must have access to an effective mentoring programme run within their organisation.

Recommendations

1. All staff should look after their own wellbeing including ensuring adequate sleep, exercise, nutrition, hydration, taking breaks/leave, setting boundaries, and engaging in enriching activities and that bring joy and purpose.
2. All staff should acknowledge the benefits of civility and show compassion towards colleagues, patients, relatives, and others they may contact within and beyond the ED.
3. EDs and organisations should support a work environment that is open, inclusive, and accessible for all, including those with disabilities and chronic illness.
4. EDs and organisations should promote positive feedback/praise as part of a normal culture; finding innovative ways to give meaningful positive feedback outside of (but including) formal processes.
5. EDs should organise regular team activities and training to foster a supportive environment, empathy and compassion towards the other team members and promote team development and cohesion.

Background

Wellbeing encompasses physical, mental, emotional and cultural health. It also includes the cultivation of healthy relationships at personal and professional levels based on appreciation, kindness, gratitude and compassion.

The wellbeing of clinicians is vital because there is abundant evidence that workplace stress in healthcare organisations affects quality of care for patients as well as doctors' own health. A number of studies have found that doctors with high levels of burnout had higher odds of making a major medical error⁶. Two thirds of UK doctors in training are at high or moderate risk of burnout⁷ and almost half of hospital employees in England are considering leaving the organisations in which they work⁸. Optimising staff wellbeing should therefore be a priority for everyone

References

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