



Health Quality Innovation Network

How Focusing on Staff Emotional Well-being Can Help You Achieve Quality & Safety Goals

June 16, 2022

Today's Speakers

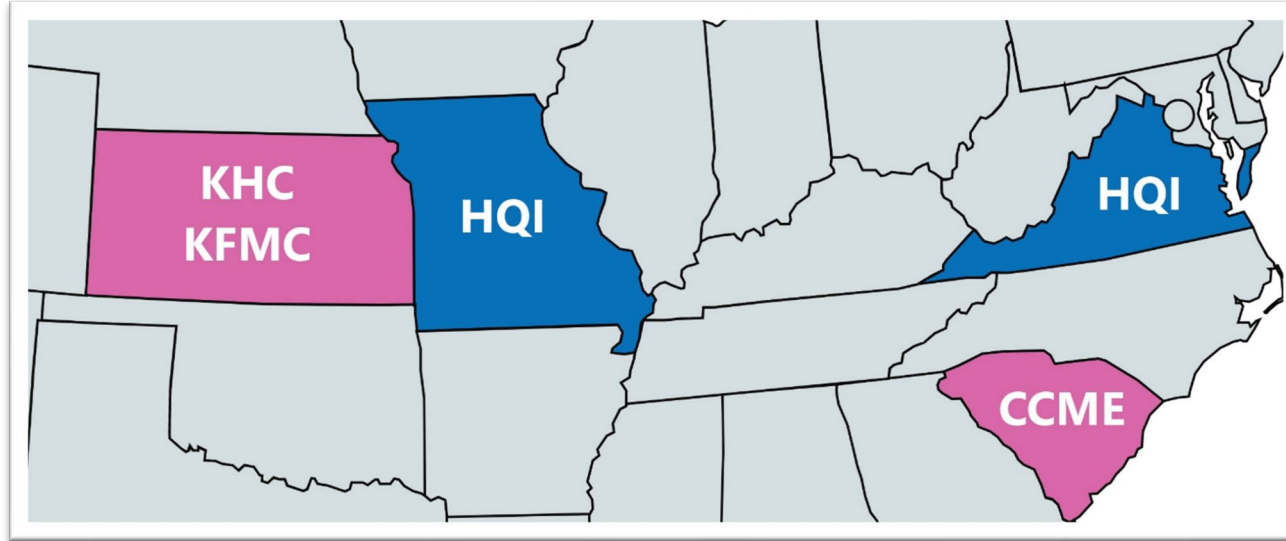


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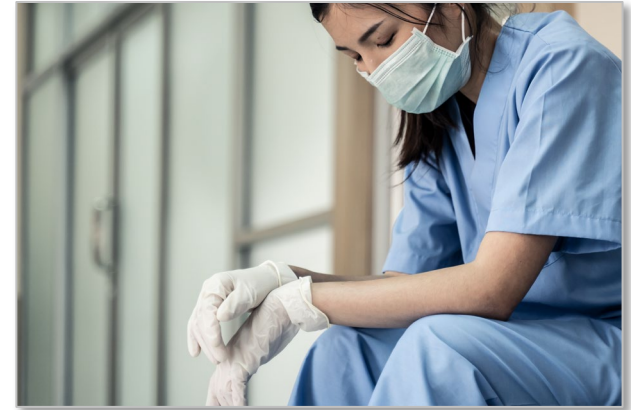
Today's Objectives

- Review HQIN's Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan Template and learn implementation strategies.
- Understand strategies that long-term care facilities can apply to improve staff mental health and well-being.
- Identify how improving staff resilience can help meet the quality and safety goals of your organization.



The Perfect Storm: COVID

- Emotional defenses of nursing home staff were challenged by the pandemic, pushing team members to their limits, both professionally and personally.
- Burnout is at an all-time high in healthcare.
- Staffing shortages, present pre-pandemic but exacerbated by the pandemic and beyond.

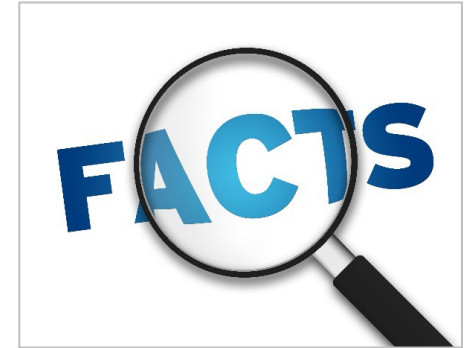


Surgeon General advisory on health worker burnout:

[Health Worker Burnout – Current Priorities of the U.S. Surgeon General | HHS](#)

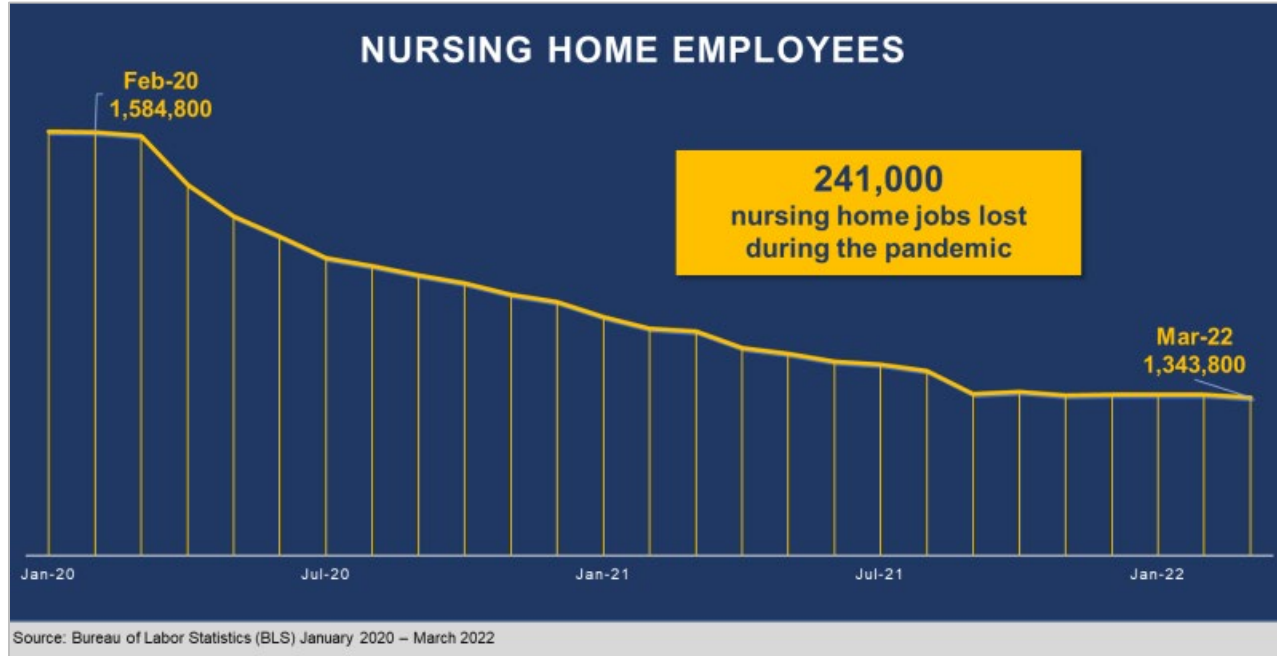
The Perfect Storm: COVID

- Projected shortage of 3 million essential healthcare workers by 2027.
- Caregiver burnout during the pandemic is a contributing factor.
- Administration focusing on ways to protect health care workers' mental well-being.
- A call from LTC industry for meaningful reform and funding.
- National Committee releases report on recommendations to improve nursing home care.



[Harris, surgeon general warn of health care worker burnout | AP News](#)
[New Surgeon General Advisory Sounds Alarm on Health Worker Burnout and Resignation | HHS](#)
[ICYMI: Workforce Shortages In Long Term Care Facilities Continue To Worsen | AHCA NCAL](#)
[The National Imperative to Improve Nursing Home Quality | National Academies](#)

Since the Start of the Pandemic Nursing Homes Have Lost 241,000 Employees (15.2% of its total workforce)



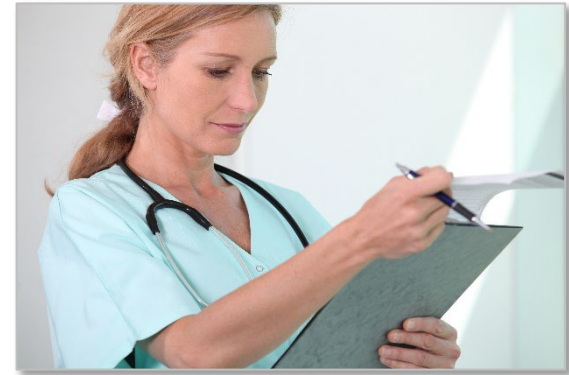
Sources of Fatigue in Frontline Staff

- Long shifts
- Care for many acute residents
- Responsibility for keen observation skills
- PPE fatigue
- Pandemic fatigue
- Standing and walking for many hours and heavy lifting of residents
- Poor sleep quality
- Caring for residents, then going home to care for family
- Guilt when calling out sick
- Grief with loss of a resident



Strengthened During the Pandemic

- Expertise developed:
 - Tech support for virtual visits
 - Intense attention on PPE
 - Heightened awareness of signs and symptoms
 - Surrogate for family during isolation
 - Trust builder
 - Innovator
 - Facility champion



Acknowledging the Stress, Loss and Grief

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it, is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

- Rachel Naomi Remen



Rachel Naomi Remen is an author about and teacher of alternative medicine in the form of integrative medicine. She is a professor at the Osher Center of Integrative Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco.

Why Focus on Employee Well-being?

- Employees under stress can impact:
 - Residents – low employee performance can lead to errors and poor care
 - Organization – high turnover rate, low staff retention and health outcomes of residents suffer
 - Employee – can lead to burnout, exhaustion, chronic stress, PTSD



Understanding, Acceptance and Growth

- Did relationships with frontline staff change or grow?
- Did ties between facilities, hospitals or agencies become stronger?
- How did your support of staff and colleagues change because of the pandemic?
- How did connectedness change?



HQIN's Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan Template

Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan Template


Facility Name: _____ Date: _____

TOPIC AREA

Antibiotic Stewardship Infection Control Surveillance Vaccination,
 Environmental Hygiene Staff Infection Exposure Prevention Mental Health
 Hand Hygiene Testing/Screening, Cohorting Residents Other
 Isolation Precautions Visitors Restriction Infection Prevention

Conduct Root Cause Analyses for Each Identified Gap or Opportunity:

- Determine contributing factors, events, system issues and processes involved.
- Utilize RCA tools as appropriate (e.g., 5 Whys, Fishbone, Cause & Effect Diagram).
- Conduct a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) to test intervention, review results and adjust action



Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan Template



Facility Name: _____ Date: _____

Area of Opportunity:

Root Cause Analysis (specify each root cause and address each within the action plan):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



S.M.A.R.T. Goal: (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-based)

Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan Template

Facility Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Start Date	Specific Actions and Interventions * HQIN IP Intervention Resources (optional)	Projected Completion Date	Person/Team Responsible * To include QSPI Committee	Ongoing Monitoring and Surveillance	Additional Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate staff to recognize signs/symptoms and ways to address or prevent stress and compassion fatigue • Educate staff that stress/compassion fatigue is not the same as mental illness 		ADM, DON, Department Heads		Tips for Healthcare Professionals Coping with Stress and Compassion Fatigue (samhsa.gov) Managing Stress during COVID-19 Pandemic (samhsa.gov) Clinicians-Care-for-Yourself.pdf (cdc.gov) Emotional Wellness Toolkit 1 National Institutes of Health (NIH)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility leaders and managers will check in with staff • Make sure they feel heard and understood • Help them identify solutions to problems and find support services where needed 		ADM, DON, Department Heads	Once a week	Disaster Distress Helpline SAMHSA Emergency Preparedness and Response Occupational Safety and Health Administration (osha.gov) Response Resources for Leaders to Address Psychosocial Needs in a Disaster (cdc.gov)

Staff Mental Health Wellbeing Action Plan Template | HQIN

Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Action Plan

Project Start Date	Specific Actions and Interventions <i>* HQIN IP Intervention Resources (optional)</i>	Projected Completion Date	Person/Team Responsible <i>*To include QAPI Committee</i>	Ongoing Monitoring and Surveillance	Additional Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask staff who their support network is and how they access it during times of social isolation 				Supporting Families of Healthcare Workers Exposed to COVID-19 (cstsonline.org)
	Encourage staff to take a five-minute mental health break		ADM, DON, Department Heads		
	Allow staff time to call family during shifts to check on them		ADM, DON, Department Heads		
	Set up or assist staff to access employee support programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Assistance Programs Set up a quiet room for staff Ensure staff can access food and other essentials Connect staff with resources for childcare 		ADM		The Emotional PPE Project

[Staff Mental Health Wellbeing Action Plan Template | HQIN](#)

Building a Framework

- [IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work](#)
- [Conversation and Action Guide to Support Staff Well-Being and Joy in Work During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) (This AHRQ resource builds upon the IHI Framework)
- [Staffing During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Guide for Nursing Home Leaders](#) (AHRQ staffing resource)
- [Well-Being Initiative](#) (American Nurses Association tools and apps to support the mental health and resilience of all nurses)

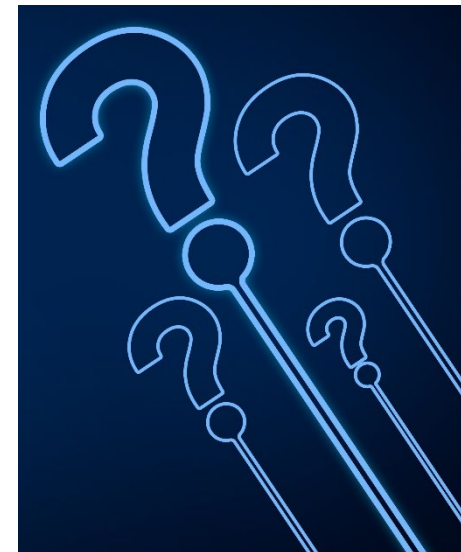


Polling Question 1

Has your facility created a space (such as a break room, reflection room, resource board, special huddle) for supporting frontline staff?

A. Yes

B. No

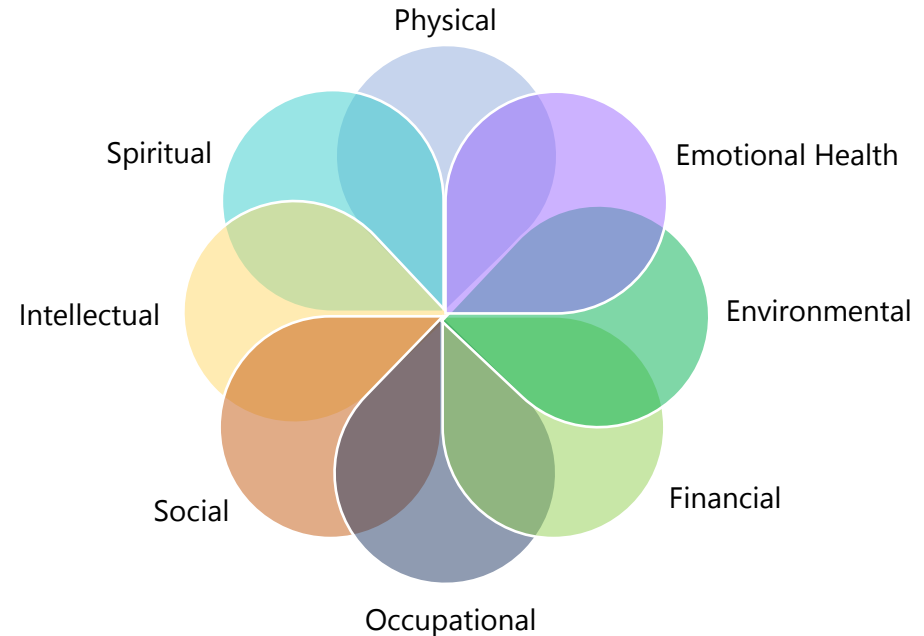


Resilience, Wellness

Resilience is “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors.”

- American Psychological Association (2012)

Dimensions of Wellness



Simple Strategies to Post on the Board

Did You Know?

There is help available if you feel overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression or anxiety.

Click on the following link to visit the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#).

Call or text 1-800-985-5990

Develop a Buddy System to support each other and monitor each other's stress, workload, and safety

- Get to know each other. Identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Set up times to check in with each other.
- Monitor each other for stress.
- Listen and share experiences and feelings. Acknowledge tough situations and recognize accomplishments, even small ones.
- Encourage each other to take breaks.
- Encourage routine sleep, exercise, and eating.
- Identify opportunities to have stress relief.

Practice mindful breathing several times a day. Take a moment for low and slow breaths before:

- Getting out of the car
- When you enter the work area
- Prior to entering a resident room

Take mini breaks at work and at home

[Simple Strategies - Staff Mental Health | HQIN](#)

Psychological Safety

The belief one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up about mistakes, ideas, questions or concerns.

The best way to discover the concerns of your staff is to ask.

A learning environment
has accountability and
psychological safety.



Scan for more information

Huddle with Psychological Safety to Decrease Failure and Increase Staff Retention

It is okay to:

- Voice unfinished thoughts
- Brainstorm out loud
- Disagree
- Ask naïve questions
- Acknowledge a learning environment



**My team has
my back!**

5 WAYS TO HELP CREATE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

- 

1. MAKE
it an explicit
priority.
- 

2. FACILITATE
everyone
speaking up.
- 

3. ESTABLISH
norms for how
failure is handled.
- 

4. CREATE
space for new ideas
(even wild ones).
- 

5. EMBRACE
productive
conflict.

 Center for Creative Leadership®

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Effective Practices for Healthcare Leaders

- Address immediate needs of staff
- Communicate honestly, authentically, regularly
- Acknowledge your own vulnerability
- Ask questions
- Remove stigma around seeking help
- Acknowledge loss, offer hope



Hearing Frontline Staff, Supporting Frontline Staff

Stop, Start, Continue, and Change Template

STOP	What are we doing in our organization that is not working? (Something we should STOP)
START	What should we put in place to improve our organization? (Something we should START)
CONTINUE	What is working well in our organization and should be continued? (Something we should CONTINUE)
CHANGE	What is working to some extent and would benefit from minor changes? (Something we should CHANGE)

Health Care Professionals Have a Voice

Table. Requests From Health Care Professionals to Their Organization During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic

Request	Principal desire	Concerns	Key components of response
Hear me	Listen to and act on health care professionals' expert perspective and frontline experience and understand and address their concerns to the extent that organizations and leaders are able	Uncertainty whether leaders recognize the most pressing concerns of frontline health care professionals and whether local physician expertise regarding infection control, critical care, emergency medicine, and mental health is being appropriately harnessed to develop organization-specific responses	Create an array of input and feedback channels (listening groups, email suggestion box, town halls, leaders visiting hospital units) and make certain that the voice of health care professionals is part of the decision-making process
Protect me	Reduce the risk of health care professionals acquiring the infection and/or being a portal of transmission to family members	Concern about access to appropriate personal protective equipment, taking home infection to family members, and not having rapid access to testing through occupational health if needed	Provide adequate personal protective equipment, rapid access to occupational health with efficient evaluation and testing if symptoms warrant, information and resources to avoid taking the infection home to family members, and accommodation to health care professionals at high risk because of age or health conditions
Prepare me	Provide the training and support that allows provision of high-quality care to patients	Concern about not being able to provide competent nursing/medical care if deployed to new area (eg, all nurses will have to be intensive care unit nurses) and about rapidly changing information/communication challenges	Provide rapid training to support a basic, critical knowledge base and appropriate backup and access to experts Clear and unambiguous communication must acknowledge that everyone is experiencing novel challenges and decisions, everyone needs to rely on each other in this time, individuals should ask for help when they need it, no one needs to make difficult decisions alone, and we are all in this together
Support me	Provide support that acknowledges human limitations in a time of extreme work hours, uncertainty, and intense exposure to critically ill patients	Need for support for personal and family needs as work hours and demands increase and schools and daycare closures occur	Provide support for physical needs, including access to healthy meals and hydration while working, lodging for individuals on rapid-cycle shifts who do not live in close proximity to the hospital, transportation assistance for sleep-deprived workers, and assistance with other tasks, and provide support for childcare needs Provide support for emotional and psychologic needs for all, including psychologic first aid deployed via webinars and delivered directly to each unit (topics may include dealing with anxiety and insomnia, practicing self-care, supporting each other, and support for moral distress), and provide individual support for those with greater distress
Care for me	Provide holistic support for the individual and their family should they need to be quarantined	Uncertainty that the organization will support/take care of personal or family needs if the health care professional develops infection	Provide lodging support for individuals living apart from their families, support for tangible needs (eg, food, childcare), check-ins and emotional support, and paid time off if quarantine is necessary

[Requests from Health Care Professionals to Their Organization During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic | JAMA Network](#)

Putting it into Practice: Example from the Frontlines

Phelps Health, a rural health system serving six counties in the south-central area of Missouri, ramped up its HEAL (Helping Employees After Loss) Program



HQIN Comprehensive Resource List for Staff

Staff Mental Health/Wellbeing Resources		
September 2021		
Source	Description	Link
Leadership Resources		
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365 day a year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.	Disaster Distress Helpline SAMHSA
CDC	Response resources for leaders coping with a disaster or traumatic event.	Response Resources for Leaders to Address Psychosocial Needs in a Disaster (cdc.gov)
US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	A framework for stress management strategies for workers and managers.	Guide to Managing Stress in Crisis Response Professions
AHCA/NCAL	Ideas to help providers prevent burnout and ensure staff feel supported at work.	Emotional-Support-HCW.pdf (ahcancal.org)
Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS)	Strategies to support families of healthcare workers exposed to COVID-19	Supporting Families of Healthcare Workers Exposed to COVID-19 (cstsonline.org)
Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)	Ideas for enhancing staff joy in work.	Lessons from Nursing Home Staff to Address Burnout and Enhance Joy in Work (ihi.org)
The Emotional PPE Project	Connects healthcare workers in need with licensed mental health professionals. All services provided are free of charge.	The Emotional PPE Project
Planetree	Examples of caring communication in a variety of	Microsoft Word - Caring

[Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources | HQIN](#)

Building on Your Resources

- [Staff Mental Health Wellbeing Action Plan Template | HQIN](#)
- [Simple Strategies – Staff Mental Health | HQIN](#)
- [Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources | HQIN](#)
- [Pause for Prevention Module 8: Caring for Yourself During an Infectious Disease Outbreak or Pandemic | HQIN](#)
- [Well-Being Concepts | CDC](#)



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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