

# Practical Approaches to Providing Emotional PPE: Ideas from a Chief Wellness Officer

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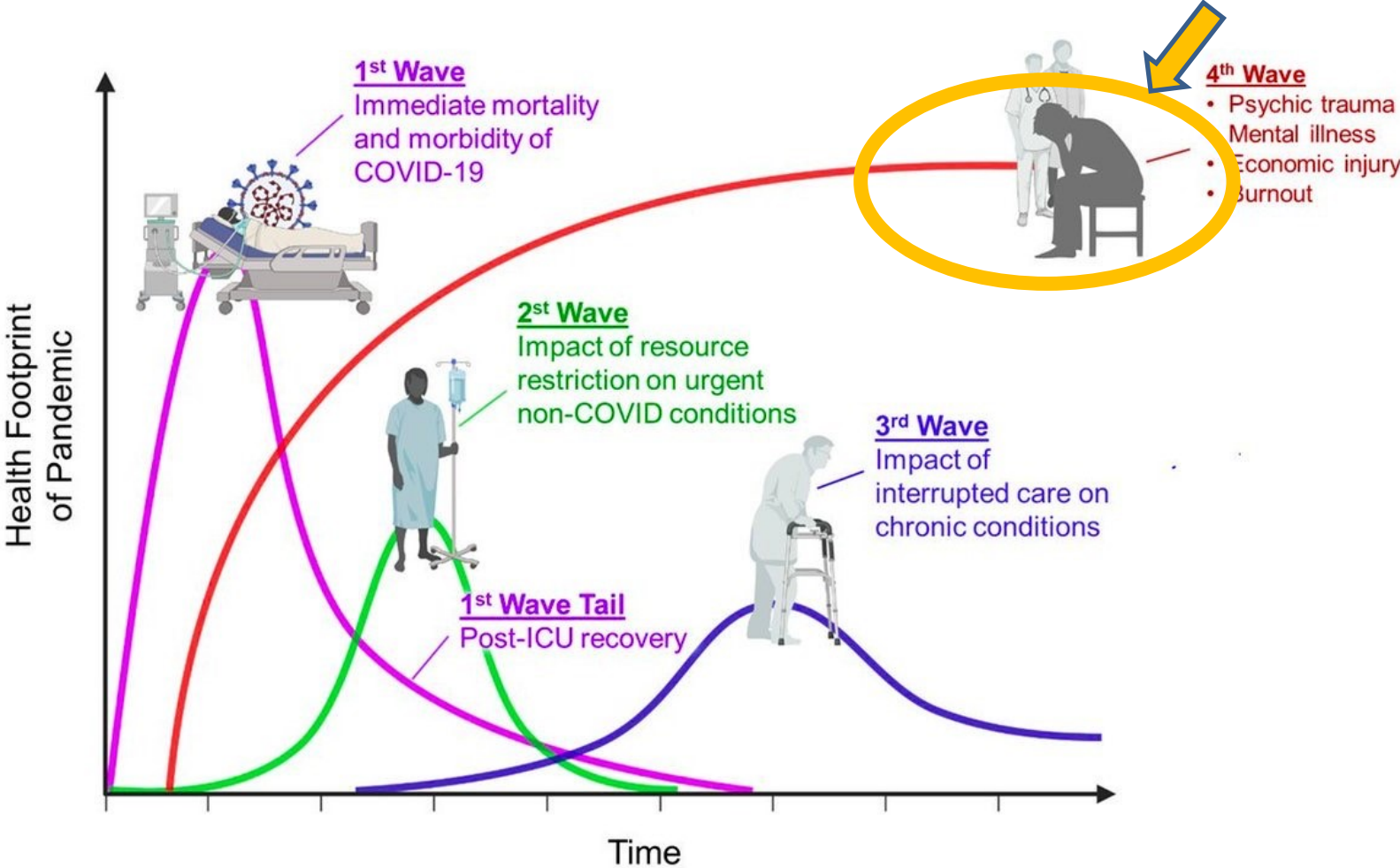
Hackensack Meridian *Health*

October 12, 2020

# Objectives

- Gain an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on psychological well-being of caregivers
- Discuss personal and organizational interventions to develop and maintain resiliency
- Learn ways in which palliative care teams can be integrated into supporting organizational well-being

# COVID-19 Surges



Credit: Dr. Victor Tseng

# Losses Due to COVID-19

- Freedoms
- Normal routines
- Predictability
- Financial stability
- Special events
- Health
- Life

# Frontline Stressors During COVID

- Increase in work demands
- Risk of infection
- PPE/Equipment concerns
- Clinician and patient support simultaneously
- Uncertainty
- High mortality
- Redeployment

HERO NY

# Psychological & Behavioral Responses to Disasters



- Change in Sleep
- Decreased Sense of Safety
- Physical (Somatic) Symptoms
- Irritability, Distraction
- Isolation, Avoidance

- Depression
- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Complex Grief

- Alcohol, Tobacco, Rx meds
- Disrupted Work/Life Balance
- Interpersonal Violence
- Restricted Activities/Travel



# WHERE ARE WE ON THE STRESS CONTINUUM AT HACKENSACK MERIDIAN?

# Baseline Well-Being Survey

- AMA's Coping with COVID Survey
- 5,220 responses
- 79% reported anxiety or depression
  - 43% moderate to severe
- 89% reported an increase in meaning and purpose



# How Do We Move Forward?

- Acknowledge that “back to normal” might never come
- Focus on building resiliency
  - Personal
  - Organizational
- Recovery doesn't happen over night
- Work will be required



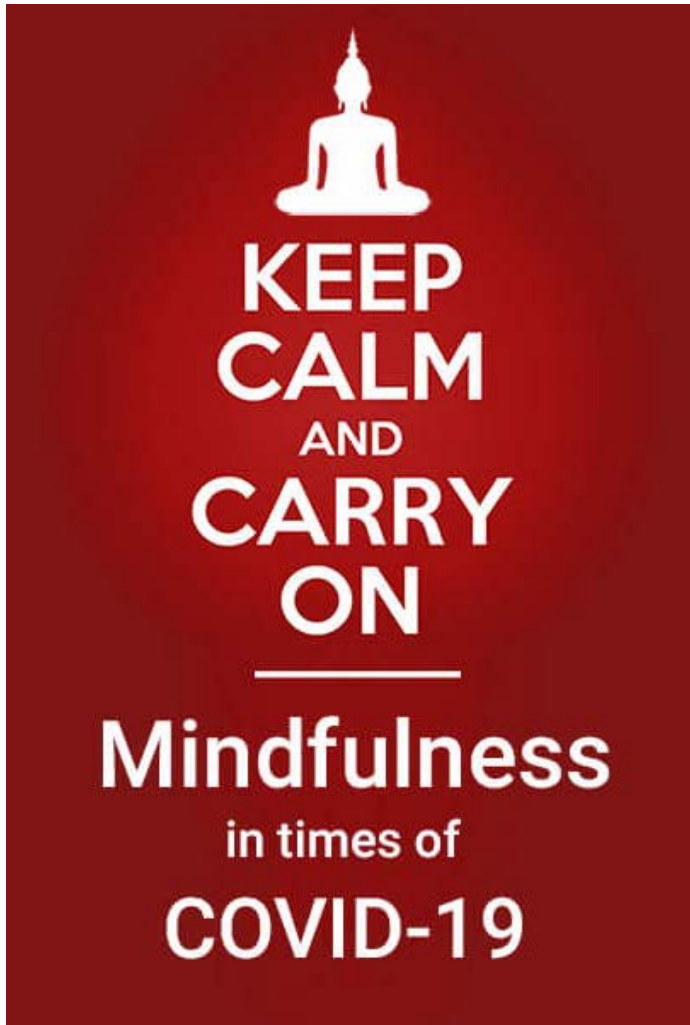
# BUILDING PERSONAL RESILIENCY

# Self Care

- Prioritize sleep
- Eat a healthy diet
- Be physically active
- Take time for yourself (not on social media)
- Disconnect from your phone
- Set boundaries for the news
- Connect with others

# Resilience: Self-Compassion

- I am doing my best
- I'm showing up
- I am a good... colleague, parent, friend, sibling
- I love my family
- I'm proud of my work



# Mindful Moments

- Pause, take a calming breath, reconnect with values and purpose
- Set an intention for the day:
  - I will make someone smile today
  - I will lead by example today
  - I will cherish my family today

# Resilience: Appreciation and Gratitude

- What good has come out of this dark time?
- Gratitude journal
- Make connections
  - Colleagues
  - Patients

# Organizational Well-Being Initiatives



# Keeping What Works

- Communication, communication, communication
  - Virtual town halls
  - Webinars
- Teamwork
- Camaraderie
- Recognition
- Meaning and purpose

# Addressing Sources of Anxiety Among Health Care Professionals During COVID

- Hear me
- Protect me
- Prepare me
- Support me
- Care for me

# Team Member Well-Being Resources

## Team Member Well-being

In order to provide the highest quality care to our communities, we need our team members to be physically and emotionally healthy for staying well.

+ Spiritual Care

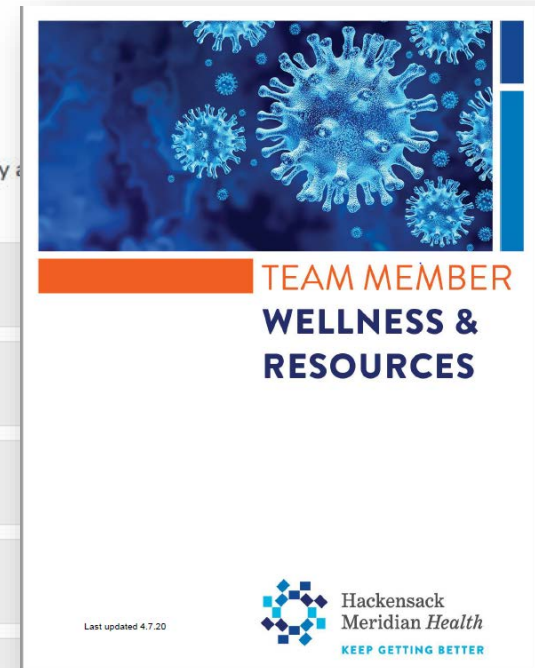
+ Emotional Well-being

+ Personal Assistance

+ Caring for Yourself

+ Caring for Loved Ones

+ Fitness and Nutrition



# Spiritual Care

- Grief
- Fear
- Hope
- Faith and Inner Peace
- Meditation, Gratitude and Purpose

# Recharge Rooms

- Place to go and briefly disconnect
- Take a deep breath
- Aromatherapy, art therapy supplies
- Healthy snacks

# Integrative Health and Medicine

- 23 live (virtual) sessions weekly
- Meditation
- Self-care
- Distance reiki
- Health coaches and health psychologists

# Mental Health Resources

- 24/7 Team Member Support Line
- WeCare: Peer Support Program
- Employee Assistance Program
- Behavioral Health Team:  
Psychologists and Psychiatrists

# Team Member Support and Navigation

- Feedback: confusion around mental health resources
  - Who do I call? Which service do I need?
- Created a team member support and navigation line
  - One number, 24/7 coverage
  - Crisis management
  - Direction to other needed resources/programs



# During the Crisis

- Avoid processing or debriefing
- Meet basic needs first
- Help the team get through the day
- Develop coping skills
- Foster resilience

# Wellness Rounds

- Psychiatry and psychology teams
- Integrative health and medicine/social work/chaplaincy
  - Brief face-to-face check-ins
  - Aromatherapy
  - Pocket cards

# Coping with COVID Groups

- Focused on building resiliency and protecting health care providers
- Done virtually
- Led licensed mental healthcare providers
- Conducted at a day/time that works best for the team
- Tailored to the needs of the team

# When the Dust Settles

- Team members need an opportunity to discuss their experiences
- Understand that range of responses exist
- Connect with colleagues
- Receive validation

# Emotional Support Sessions

- Face-to-face, unit-based sessions
- Opportunity for teams to share their experiences
- Vent
- Understand that they are not alone
- Gain coping skills for moving forward

# Internal Marketing Campaign

- *Even Heroes Need to Recharge*
- Goal to de-stigmatize mental health
- It's OK to not be OK
- Home mailing with thanks to team and family members
- Signage, video, newsletters

# Leadership Mental Health Training

- Two mandatory one-hour sessions
- Recognize distress in team members and selves
- De-stigmatize mental health issues
- Manage crisis in the moment
- Where and how to appropriately refer

# Network Day of Remembrance

- Palliative care team created a remembrance service for families of patients who died from COVID
- Site specific memorials held (on same day)
  - Consistent with site specific culture
  - Team members wore blue
  - Forget me notes distributed
- Network virtual service for team members lost (as well as patients lost)
- Memorial created in a local park



# Financial Wellness

- Circle of Compassion
  - \$1.2 million in donations from senior leaders
  - Team member group reviews application
- Base salary increases
- Social determinants of health
  - Deep dive into team member population

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Listening to Understand sessions
  - Assess team's thoughts and feelings
  - Build a plan for how to best move forward
- Well-being is inextricably linked to valuing diversity in the team
  - Comfort in bringing one's whole and best self to work each day

# Psychological Safety

- Well-being must be integrated into all aspects of work
- HRO journey
  - Safety event reporting
  - Speaking up for safety
- Civility and respect training

# Palliative Care Contributions to Well-Being

- Palliative care providers have skillset that we need, now more than ever
  - Communication
  - Emotional support
  - Anticipatory grief and bereavement
- Team care and self-care expertise

# Palliative Care Contributions to Well-being

- Consistent source of emotional support for other caregivers at baseline
  - Difficult case, difficult death, challenging family dynamics
- Tension between using skills to support team during COVID and potential for burnout
- COVID: available to the extent that their bandwidth/capacity allows

# Structural Change to Support Well-Being

- Self-care and resiliency only go so far
- Structural change is needed to support well-being
- Organizational
- National

**“Joy not burnout should rule the day.”**

**Donald M. Berwick, MD  
President Emeritus and Senior Fellow  
Institute for Healthcare Improvement**



**Joy is one of health care's greatest assets.**

**Why “joy in medicine”?  
And why now?**

**Joy is a connection to meaning, purpose,  
and resilience.**

**Joy is a fundamental right.**



# Bringing Back Joy: What is HMH Doing?

- Chief Wellness Officer and Office of Clinician Experience
- Listening campaign: inventory of stressors and strengths
- Evaluation of staffing/multi-disciplinary team
- EMR optimization
- GME well-being program
- Civility and respect training

# Bringing Back Joy: What Can We Do as Clinicians?

- Why did we enter healthcare?
- What can we control?
- How do we reconnect?
  - Learn our patients' stories
  - Share some of ourselves

**THERE IS ALWAYS  
SOME KID WHO MAY  
BE SEEING ME FOR  
THE FIRST TIME. I  
OWE HIM MY BEST.**

QUANTICO.COM

Joe DiMaggio  
American Athlete

# Reconnecting to Purpose

- Purpose is the connection between self and service
- Purpose is finding a calling
- Shared purpose creates community

*“Technical skills saved me, but interpersonal skills healed me.” -Sean Kavanaugh*

**What will you do differently as a result of our discussions today?**

**DO WHAT BRINGS YOU  
JOY, AND YOUR  
PURPOSE WILL UNFOLD**

IYANLA VANZANT

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# Resources for Clinician Wellness

<http://wellmd.stanford.edu/>

<https://www.thehappymd.com>

[www.acgme.org/what-we-do/initiatives/physician-well-being](http://www.acgme.org/what-we-do/initiatives/physician-well-being)

# Thank You!

→ Questions

→ Comments/Feedback