Harm to Healing

Supporting Patients and Families Following Medical Harm – Are We Missing the Boat?

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Harm to Healing - Objectives

1. Identify themes in patient/family harm journeys.

2. Relate these to themes to the experience of medical harm in a facility/organization.

3. Identify gaps/barriers to healing from the patient/family perspective.

4. Recognize strategies which accelerate the healing process from a patient/family perspective.
Harm to Healing - Outline

1. Themes in harm journeys
2. Harm to healing study
3. Gaps/barriers to healing
4. Discussion - strategies, solutions, next steps
Harm to Healing – Themes

Patients and families

- devastated by harm and the journey of harm
- want to know what happened
- want to heal
- want to help make it safer

Every patient safe  La sécurité pour tous les patients
Harm to Healing – Themes

Hitting Brick Walls

Communication

Information

Patient/Families/Providers/Organizations

Healing

Helping
Harm to Healing – Themes

Health care providers and organizations only get it ‘half right’ when patients/family members are not partners in safety improvements.
Harm to Healing – Study

By understanding the journey from harm to healing, patients/families and providers/organizations can better assess their fit and readiness to collaborate in improving the safety of care.

Better fit = better chance of success in collaborations

Formative research
Study question

When are patients/families who have been harmed ready to participate as advisors in patient safety and quality improvement initiatives?

What might prevent them from being effective partners?
Harm to Healing – Study

Study team

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http://www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/English/research/commissionedResearch/HarmtoHealing/Documents/Harm%20to%20Healing.pdf
Harm to Healing – Study

Methodology

- literature review
- model & framework development and testing
  - discussions with experts
  - interviews with patients/families/leaders
- adaptations to the model
- submission
Harm to Healing – Study

Literature review

current journal articles, recent books (recovery, healing, harm, grief, bereavement, forgiveness)

- frameworks
- constructs
- models
Harm to Healing – Study

Readiness is a two-way street

patient/family
people in the organization
Harm to Healing – Study

Models of grief

Grief is about loss

- loved one
- physical ability / wellness
- relationship
- role in life
- view of the world
- meaning
Harm to Healing – Study

Five stages of dying (Kubler Ross, 1969)

1. denial and isolation
2. anger
3. bargaining
4. depression
5. acceptance
Harm to Healing – Study

Normal processes of grief & adaptation
(Sanders, 1992)

1. shock
2. awareness of loss
3. withdrawal
4. healing
5. renewal
Harm to Healing – Study

Feelings/emotions/activities

The grief process is utterly exhausting.

It involves internal & external processes of coping.
Dual Process Model

Distress Avoidance
- grief work
- intrusion of grief
- breaking bonds/ties/relocation
- denial avoidance of restoration changes

Restoration Oriented
- attending to life changes
- doing new things
- distraction from grief
- denial/avoidance of grief
- new roles/identities/relationships

Stroebe & Schut, 1999
Harm to Healing – Study

Complicated grief
- delayed grief
- distorted grief
- chronic grief
- complicated by
  - major depression
  - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Complicated grief triggers

- unexpectedness (young, dependent)
- something that could have been done by self or another
- too many losses in short period of time
- other illness (physical or mental)
Harm to Healing – Study

Complicated grief signs/symptoms

- prolonged depression, anger, despair
- not progressing in recovery
- a sense of being “stuck”
- guilt/blame
- feeling “the victim”
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
Harm to Healing – Study

Complicated Grief – needs intervention
Harm to Healing – Study

Complicated grief – what else?

Response of the organization and “second harm”
- no acknowledgement
- no apology
- no accountability / responsibility
- no improvements
Harm to Healing – Study

Response by the healthcare organization/providers

- extremely important
- can be either supportive or non-supportive
- timeliness is important
- small things are remembered and appreciated
- support is essential (informal and formal)

Remember ‘second harm’ and ‘complicated grief’
Harm to Healing – Study

Patient/Family: Readiness for collaboration

- grief / healing cycle
- previous experience
- ability to see “the larger picture”
- ability to collaborate
- tolerance for frustration
- motivation
- skills for the task
- others
Harm to Healing – Study

Patient/Family: Readiness for collaboration

grief / healing cycle
  - appropriate time for grieving has past
  - signs of recovery (internal & external coping)
  - right motivating factors
Harm to Healing – Study

Organization: Readiness for collaboration

- process of invitation
- background information & expectations
- conversation
- graduated involvement
- orientation
- support (disclosure, resourcing, expectations)

Leaders have to *really want this* and make it happen!
Harm to Healing – Gaps/barriers

After harm from the patient/family perspective

Supportive & non supportive actions

- disclosure (communication/information)
- contact and connectivity
Harm to Healing – Gaps/barriers

1. What supportive actions do healthcare organizations/providers offer after harm?
   - What does disclosure look like today?
   - What does ‘contact’ and ‘connectivity’ look like today?

2. Do healthcare organizations/providers/patients/families understand the harm to healing journey?

3. What role does leadership play in the safety culture of the organization?
Harm to Healing – Strategies, solutions, next steps

1. What are patients/families telling us?

2. Who are the leaders/leading organizations?
   
   What are they doing?
   How can we spread these actions?

3. What can we do to get things going?
Harm to Healing – Strategies, solutions, next steps

Resources

- Harm to healing study
- Harm to healing video clips
- Good practice sheets (Alberta Health Services)
- Harm to healing brochure (Alberta Health Services)
- Others?
Harm to Healing – Strategies, solutions, next steps

Questions and discussion