ENHANCING WELLNESS AND RETENTION AMONG PSYCHOLOGISTS USING EMPLOYEE WELLNESS SURVEYS

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the current context and the need for organizational and supervisory actions that enhance clinical employees’ perception of support.

2. Understand why a local employee wellness survey is an important tool for VHA psychologists and VHA leaders.

3. Understand how to translate employee feedback into actionable next steps.
WHY WELLNESS & RETENTION?

• Healthcare Provider Burnout and Turnover:
  
  • Are at crisis levels.
  
  • Are systemic challenges that respond to leadership interventions.
  
  • Are not inevitable outcomes of the current global situation.
WHY VHA PSYCHOLOGISTS?

• VHA Psychologists:
  • Understand human needs for certainty, safety, and organizational support.
  • Have expertise in shaping human centered policies.
  • Ask the right questions, identify critical themes, and take responsive actions.
WHY LOCAL SURVEYS?

- AES plus local surveys provide:
  - Increased specificity, quality, and applicability of survey feedback.
  - Clear feedback loop between employees and local leadership.
  - Forum for employee priorities to influence local policy development and implementation.
CASE EXAMPLE

VA Puget Sound Health Care System (VAPSHCS), PCMHI section

• Employee Wellness Survey

  • Assessed PCMHI employees’ perception of:
    • Quantitative - Psychological safety, burnout, organizational support, team environment, intent to leave
    • Qualitative - Concerns, strengths, priorities

CASE EXAMPLE

• Survey results informed section-wide policy changes:
  
  • **Flexible and alternative TODs** → more than 70% PCMHI staff on nontraditional tours
  
  • **Enhanced communication between service lines** → section-wide service line agreement
  
  • **Increased focus on safety of employees at rural CBOCs** → security on site, doors installed between waiting room and clinical area
  
  • **Increased staffing** → current staffing levels are now consistent with national recommendations
**STEP BY STEP HOW-TO**

**Step 1:** If frontline staff, seek leadership support and approval

**Step 2:** Design a mixed methods survey to answer your key questions

**Step 3:** Obtain union approval

**Step 4:** Obtain facility authorization from IRB and/or Research Development Committee to administer the survey as a quality improvement project
**STEP BY STEP HOW-TO**

**Step 5:** Administer the survey in a way to maximize engagement (e.g., dedicate time during a meeting, make it easy and anonymous, limit or eliminate any questions required for completion)

**Step 6:** Analyze data and qualitative themes at the department and team level (if possible)

**Step 7:** Consider what leadership has the power to influence and develop action items

**Step 8:** Share the survey results and planned actions with the department and/or team

**Step 9:** Use a PDSA cycle to implement and assess the effectiveness and acceptability of your response to employee concerns
RESOURCES


THANK YOU!

• Questions or interested in additional resources?

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