Workforce Stress and the Supportive Organisation: A framework for improvement through reflection, curiosity and change

The National Workforce Skills Development Unit focuses on a range of national mental health workforce issues and is a service commissioned from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust by Health Education England.
Presentation outline

- About us
- Why we need this framework - introduction and background
- What is the framework:
  - The five pillars model
  - The reflection, curiosity and change process
- Questions and feedback
About the Unit

• Commissioned by Health Education England
• Working on projects related to workforce challenges and mental health in the NHS
• Examples of other ongoing projects:
  • Supporting Promotion of Mental Health Careers and Developing Psychology Graduate Career Pathways
  • Developing good practice in developing new workforce roles
Project background

• Commissioned by HEE in 2017 – how to support NHS staff with stress?

• Research report commissioned and regular Expert Reference Group convened

• Idea behind the framework:
  • Move away from focus on individual resilience towards organisational resilience
  • Creating a framework rather than another intervention

• Framework has been tested for proof of concept in eight NHS organisations through workshops

• To be submitted to HEE by end of March 2019
The 5 pillars model

• 5 interconnected pillars to structure thinking about organisations

• Conceptual foundations containing key concepts and thinking around organisational life
Behaviours, Attitudes and Beliefs

The particular mix of these which are (consciously and unconsciously) encouraged and reinforced in a team or organisation, making up the organisational climate.

Leadership and Management

The ways in which those in formal authority at all levels of the organisation take up and carry out their role.

The Nature of the Work

The particular aspects of the work that individuals and teams in health and care organisations carry out.
Psychological Safety

“A climate of trust and respect, where employees feel valued and their psychological well-being prioritised by management” (Dollard, M.F., and Bakker, A.B. (2010).

Structures and Processes

“The environmental, technological and managerial systems of an organisation.”
Conceptual foundations

The conceptual foundations underpin both the model and the framework:

• Interconnectedness
• Uncertainty
• Complexity
• Unconscious Life of Organisations
• Containment
• Collaboration
• Authority
The reflection, curiosity and change process

- A structured process to think about experience and organisations
- A continuous cyclical process in three phases
Phase 1: Engaging with this approach; exploring your organisational experience?
This phase encourages you to reflect on your individual or group experience of your organisation; be curious about which of the pillars you think might impact on you and others the most and to think about what positive change might look like. A series of questions against each stage of the process is included below to help you to do this.

Phase 2: Using information; sense checking your organisational experience
The second phase asks you to reflect on what you might need to find out and whether your experience is that of others; be curious about how you might go about this – data sources, other sources of information, - and to start taking action to change by collecting the information you have identified. It is important to stress that this phase is not about jumping to solutions, rather you should be using the process to better understand the organisational experience.

Phase 3: Taking action; changing your organisational experience
This phase encourages you to reflect on what the information you have collected is telling you, be curious about the approaches, actions and interventions you can take and those others have taken. Once implemented, have they have brought about the change you intended?
Thank you!
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