Leadership and Communication – During times of increased pressure

During times of high pressure it's more important than ever for leaders to display behaviours which reassure and provide direction for their teams. It's also vital that leaders focus not only on the wellbeing of their staff but also on their own wellbeing.

Here are 5 strategies you could implement

1. Set clear priorities to ensure a common purpose

- Assign priorities to team leaders empowering them to make decisions
- Executive leaders will need to shift some previously held responsibilities to break down the hierarchy of authority
- Communicate any change to team member responsibilities to ensure clarity of roles and reporting routes

2. Remain present

- Pause and reflect when new information arrives then act
- Take 5 minute breaks to stay grounded and prevent overreacting

3. Stay connected

- Ensure point-of-care teams are kept in the loop with the changes
- Seek opportunities to reallocate resources to ensure the safety of teams and patients
- Dispel myths and admit when you don't know the answer (and that you'll provide an answer when it's available)

- Keep it safe for team members (clinical and non-clinical) to speak up and express their concerns
- Let them know the leadership is there for them and that you're all in this together
- Check in and ask 'are we all on the same page?'

4. Be transparent

- Teams are relying on the leadership to relay information and provide direction regularly
- Have in place a communication process (for example progressive safety huddles) which will keep all tiers and levels of the system informed
- State the facts and ensure the messaging across all levels of the system is consistent and timely (for example daily at 9am and 3pm)
- Keep communication brief and concise
- Anticipate questions and be ready (for example access to PPE)
- Be decisive and adaptable

5. Show compassion

- You and your staff will face magnified professional and personal challenges
- Leaders need to be mindful of their own wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of staff to ensure the sustained effectiveness in decision-making
- Factor in an end of the day huddle (observe social distancing or use virtual (Skype for business) when it's possible
- Remind yourself and your staff of the positives that have and will arise from this time of high pressure
- When you thank your staff, remember to appreciate that you are doing the best you can

Further information about Teamwork and Communication?

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