

LEADERSHIP WALKAROUNDS

INFORMATION FOR EXECUTIVES

What is a Leadership WalkAround?

Leadership WalkArounds provide executive leaders the opportunity to connect with staff directly involved in patient care. The WalkAround occurs in the unit where the care is provided to visibly demonstrate the organisation's commitment to patient and staff safety.

Purpose

Leadership WalkArounds increase awareness of safety issues and emphasise dual ownership of safety between patient care staff and the executive. Executives gain an understanding of the issues that affect safety for unit level staff and have the ability to act quickly and give feedback to staff on any actions taken in response to their concerns.

Benefits

- Enhances relationships and communication between executives and unit level staff
- There is increased responsiveness to the safety concerns of unit level staff
- Promotes rapid testing of safety-based improvements

Getting started

- Strong commitment to the process from executive leaders is essential
- Establish a core team with representatives from, the executive (DON, DMS, GM), Patient Safety or Quality Manager and also a scribe
- Design a facility-specific question list to guide the conversation

Where to round

Leadership WalkArounds incorporate all patient care areas including outpatients, radiology and pharmacy.

Scheduling

- Schedule an hour each week for the WalkArounds
- WalkArounds may be rescheduled but never cancelled
- Avoid shift changes, multidisciplinary patient rounds and any known high activity time for clinical units
- Send the question guide to team leaders at least two days before the scheduled Leadership WalkAround

Conversation

- Commence with an opening statement to ensure all staff are clear on the purpose of the WalkAround.
- Have no more than 5-8 facility-specific questions ready (see conversation guide for executives)
- The allocated scribe will document all safety concerns and achievements which will inform the delegation and timeline of actions
- Close the conversation with a statement on your commitment to act on the concerns expressed and invite staff to share their learnings and the purpose of the Leadership WalkAround with two other staff members

Documentation

- Record staff groups (such as: nursing, medical, allied health, catering, cleaning) as well as date, time and concerns raised
- Maintain a record of action items immediately addressed (during the round)

Closing the loop

- Set in place a system for providing timely feedback to staff on actions taken. This not only demonstrates to staff the value of

Leadership WalkArounds, but also encourages reporting of safety concerns

- Include Leadership WalkArounds as a standard agenda item in business meetings

Measuring Effectiveness

Some ways to measure effectiveness include:

- The number of scheduled WalkArounds completed
- Number of action items entered and resolved
- Use of voluntary reporting systems
- Safety-based changes made each year
- Staff experience of participating in Leadership WalkArounds
- Executive experience of participating in Leadership WalkArounds

Implementation time

Allow approximately four weeks for planning before commencing Leadership WalkArounds.

The role of the CEC

The CEC's Team Culture and Communication aims to enhance teamwork and communication at the point of care and support clinicians to create the conditions to allow quality and safety improvement to occur through:

- Resource provision
- Education/coaching
- Setting up a data dashboard
- Assistance with tailoring to meet the individual needs of facilities



Key points

- Commit to Leadership WalkArounds at least once a week
- Dates and times of Leadership WalkArounds are scheduled and notified to all staff early enough for them to consider their safety concerns as well as their safety focused achievements
- Needs of the clinical unit are considered when scheduling
- Perspectives and concerns of all staff, clinical and non-clinical, are included in the conversation
- A structured, but informal, format keeps the conversation focused on patient safety and the goal of providing harm-free care
- Establish a process to communicate to staff the safety issues raised and the progress of actions

For further information, tools & support please contact:
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