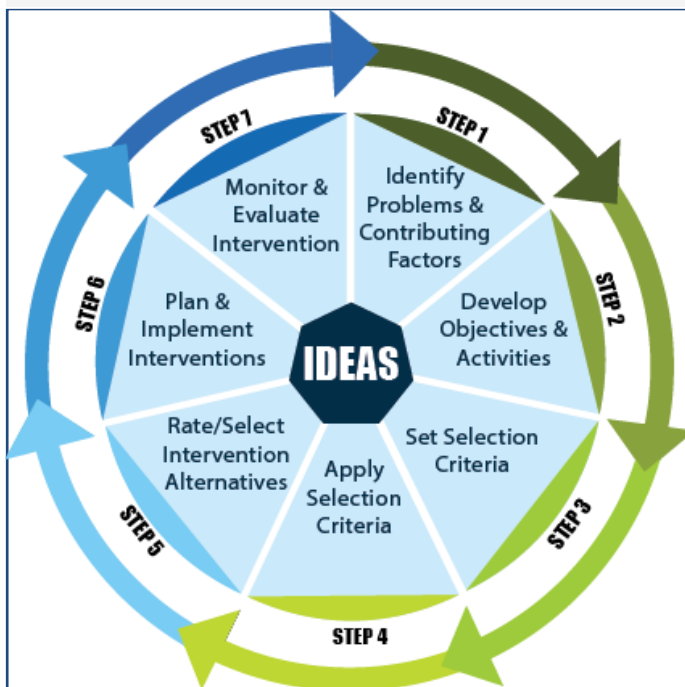




Overview

In 2018, SHIFT study research personnel from the Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace (CPH-NEW), partnered with public sector healthcare facilities in New England, to evaluate the effectiveness of the Healthy Workplace Participatory Program (HWPP), a method designed to engage front-line workers to identify health, safety, and wellbeing topics and develop solutions. The IDEAS Tool is a 7-step process that guides the committees through health and safety problem solving



1. Design Team and Steering Committee Structure
2. Health, Safety, and Well-being: Setting Priorities
3. Solutions Developed
4. Proposed Intervention Activities
5. Recent Design Team Activities

Healthcare Worker Burnout

Burnout has been a major concern among the healthcare workforce for many years. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 1/3 to 1/2 of US healthcare workers nationally reported experiencing burnout. The pandemic has heightened this phenomenon.

Design Team and Steering Committee Structure

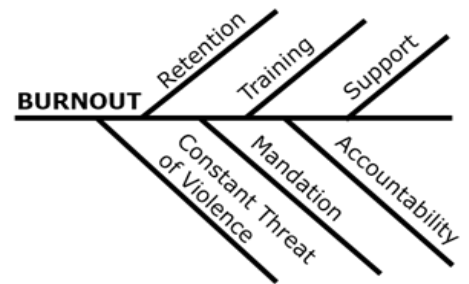
The Design Team is a joint labor-management health and safety committee. They represent many departments in the hospital including nursing, mental health work, social work, dietary, and campus police. The team has equal representation from front-line staff and mid-level managers. One front-line staff and one mid-level manager facilitate the Design Team through the “IDEAS” process (see figure). On average, the Design Team met every other week for 90 minutes to work through the IDEAS process.

The Steering Committee is made up of the top leadership positions in the hospital including the CEO, COO, Director of Nursing, and Director of Medicine, Director of Facilities, and Director of Social Work. The program Champion was a member of the Steering Committee who communicated routinely with the two Design Team co-facilitators.

Health, Safety, and Well-being: Setting Priorities

Priority issues from leadership interviews included “mental well-being of workers” and “workload – fatigue, turnover, overtime”

- DT members brainstormed a list of health, safety, and well-being concerns at the hospital.
- They prioritized the topic of burnout for the IDEAS process.
- A root cause analysis of burnout identified underlying causes.



Solutions Developed

The DT defined a Health and Safety Objective (below) and brainstormed relevant activities that could lead to four main solutions.

Objective: Reduce burnout to improve health, safety, and wellness of the staff.

- Solutions:**
1. Improve ability of staff to use earned time.
 2. Improve relevant staff training.
 3. Support and engage employees
 4. Prepare staff to manage and minimize the impact of violence

Proposed Intervention Activities

- Sensory tools for staff
- Improved orientation
- Leadership training
- Preceptor program
- Increased staff
- Policy for taking time off
- Advancement opportunities

Recent Design Team Activities

The Steering Committee approved 7 of the intervention activities planned by the Design Team. Implementation of some of these activities was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognizing the impacts of COVID-19 to their workforce in fall 2021, DT members trained as focus group facilitators and initiated a series of listening sessions with frontline workers, facility leaders, and agency-level leaders. The listening sessions identified five key health and safety concerns shared by staff at all levels: communication, respect, leadership, teamwork, and training.

The Steering Committee and Design Team are targeting 2023 to expand the design team process to more hospital units to help more mental health workers improve conditions and working life in their immediate work groups.



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