

Exposure of Non-Medical Personnel to Traumatic Sights and Experiences in the Emergency Department

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Housekeeping, cleaning and other ancillary staff are an integral part of the ED manpower, it would be impossible to maintain an efficiently operating ED without their work. Generally the people that perform this type of work are from diverse, often marginal ethnic backgrounds.

During the course of their everyday work, on a daily basis in the ED, these employees are exposed to traumatic sights and experiences including seriously wounded patients suffering multiple injuries stabbing, gunshot wounds, accidents and the like. Ancillary staff is routinely called upon to clean pools of blood, collect and dispose of used emergency medical waste, and transport corpses to the hospital morgue.

The ancillary staff has become an integral part of the ED activities, more than mere passive observers; emotionally and actively involved in ED medical treatments.

While ED medical staff; doctors, nurses, and students receive intensive training, debriefing and support in dealing with exposure to medical trauma, the untrained and less-educated ancillary staff, who are significantly less equipped to handle such experiences, are not provided with tools to deal with these challenges. This paper intends to explore the benefit of an interventional program specifically designed for ancillary staff.

The Study design is as follows:

A.Current sensitivity to traumatic events will be measured by a questionnaire mapping out emotional reaction to traumatic experiences. The questionnaire will be prepared and distributed to ED ancillary staff. B.The questionnaire will be followed-up by a 3 session group meetings addressing psychological tools to trauma exposure C.Post intervention will be evaluated via questionnaire We infer that an interventional program will significantly impact the ability of ancillary staff to deal with traumatic sights and experiences. Similarly, we believe that employees participating in an interventional program will experience an increased feeling of organizational commitment as well as personally empowered.