

Sharing outstanding excellence: a positive event reporting system

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Aims

Our aim was to understand what goes well and why it goes well with the concurrent aim of improving morale.

Methods

We are encouraged to report negative events and changes to practice are made based on learning from negative events, but most of the time things go well – and we rarely stop to consider why they did. Currently 57% of staff agree that they learn from negative events, but only 28% of staff felt they learn from positive events.

The sharing outstanding excellence (SOX) initiative offers an opportunity for anyone to nominate staff for excellence using a paper or online form by asking the question 'What did they do that was excellent?' These nominations are sent to our quality lead, then to the recipient and their line manager. This was piloted on a single ward and rolled out through various areas with the target of implementing SOX across the trust.

The initiative was promoted via ward/department meetings, one-to-one conversations with clinicians/administrators of all grades, Twitter and posters around the trust. Roll-out was supported by the academic health science network and areas are at different stages of uptake.

Learning takes place through appreciative inquiry and reviewing themes with multiple staff groups. Themes are shared with all staff at department meetings, clinical governance sessions and via trust-wide newsletters.

Results

Benefits are expected in three areas.

- > The recipient is rewarded and has a chance to reflect and learn.
- > The trust is able to learn from the overview of themes and make improvements.
- > The nominator is encouraged to look for examples and recognise good practice, which brings with it a more positive culture.

The initiative has been welcomed by staff and management teams, and a regular and increasing influx of SOX reports is received. 'Plan, do, study, act' cycles have allowed questions to be refined to improve helpful information.

In the pilot, 93% reported that SOX reporting had improved staff morale. Those that had been nominated reported feeling 'appreciated', 'boosted confidence' and 'fantastic'.

Early measures show a self-reported increase in learning from positive feedback from 76% to 93%.

Conclusion

Positive event reporting can benefit staff morale, engagement and patient safety. This change is a simple one that has the potential to be a powerful agent for change. Staff involved agree that the initiative should definitely continue. The main challenge is the administrative time involved in typing up the nominations. ■

Conflict of interest statement

None.

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