



Care for the Caregiver Quality Checking Tool

Today, burnout within the healthcare profession is rampant. This burnout affects the quality of life of healthcare personnel and the quality of care for patients and families. That is why person-centered organizations strive to not only meet the full range of patient and family needs, but also those of the healthcare professionals. Instituting measures to support caregivers in maintaining their physical health and emotional well-being is an important strategy for improving retention, enhancing employee engagement, increasing joy in practice, and ultimately, improving quality of care.

The ten question Quality Checking Tool was developed by Planetree to support organizations in assessing the current state of their care for the caregiver efforts, and then, identifying approaches for addressing gaps that may emerge. See pages 2-3 for specific strategies for meeting the needs identified in the self-assessment.

	YES	PARTIALLY	No
Staff has access to off-stage space where they can unwind and decompress out of sight and out of earshot of patients and families.			
Interaction and collaboration with colleagues from other units/departments/disciplines is actively encouraged.			
Educational opportunities and trainings are available to support staff in continuous learning and professional growth.			
Structures or processes are in place to facilitate staff involvement in decisions that impact their functional work area or role.			
Staff receives real-time feedback and coaching on where they are providing the most value and how they can be more effective.			
Programs and activities are offered to support staff in adopting and maintaining healthy behaviors.			
Measures have been taken to support staff in maintaining work-life balance.			
Measures are in place to support staff in coping with the potentially emotionally taxing aspects of their work, including grief and loss.			
Healthy food is available to all staff, including those who work on weekends and at night.			
Processes are in place to elicit insights from staff on their experiences with existing staff support services and to identify needs for additional supports.			



Approaches for Enhancing Care for the Caregiver

Off Stage Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Break room enhancements, e.g. pleasant artwork, natural light, comfortable furniture, tea corner• White noise machines in break rooms to preserve auditory privacy• “Reset Room,” i.e. a private space staff can go for a brief respite after a particularly challenging episode
Interaction and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inviting dining areas to encourage staff to eat together• Mentor or Buddy programs• Opportunities for staff to participate on teams, groups or programs with colleagues from other sectors/disciplines• Organization-wide celebrations (picnic, employee recognition dinner, holiday party, etc.)• Small budget gatherings for teams, e.g. potlucks
Continuous Learning and Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incentives for staff to attend and present at conferences• Career ladders• Flexible scheduling to enable educational pursuits• Lunch and Learns / Speakers Series• Book clubs• Tuition reimbursement
Inclusion and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit-based councils• Rapid improvement events• Practice improvement teams• Leadership rounds• Listening circles
Culture of Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-the-spot recognition toolkit• Regular employee-manager check-ins (beyond annual performance evaluation)• Leader rounding with an emphasis on gratitude and recognition• Colleague “shout outs” as a standard agenda item for all team meetings



Health Promotion

- On-site exercise classes and/or fitness center discounts
- Walking paths
- Walking meetings
- On-site weight management classes
- Availability of bike racks
- Smoking cessation support
- Cooking demonstrations to support staff in adopting healthy eating habits
- Ergonomic assessments of work areas
- Chair massages for staff
- Classes on self-care and stress reduction strategies
- Accommodations for breastfeeding mothers

Work-Life Balance

- Concierge services (meals-to-go, on-site oil changes/dry cleaning picking; gift wrapping around the holidays, etc.)
- Encouragement for staff to take breaks (during the day and vacation time)
- Flexible scheduling allowances

Emotional Support

- Schwartz Rounds
- Bereavement/support groups
- Employee assistance programs
- Emotional debriefs after difficult cases/events
- Code Lavender
- Staff participation in rituals around death and dying, including memorial services for patients who have died

Healthy Food

- On-site farmers' market
- Boxed meals that can be ordered in advance by night shift staff
- Healthy vending machine options
- Adequate accommodations for staff to chill and re-heat food brought in from home

Co-Production of Care for the Caregiver Initiatives

- Care for the Caregiver team
- Employee survey on staff support services
- Suggestion box
- Targeted employee focus groups on this topic