

A Quality Improvement Project: Improving Post-Pathogen Exposure Safety

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Abstract

Background: Post-pathogen exposure prophylaxis policies are vitally important for those working in the healthcare field. Routine revisions are necessary to ensure workplace safety and avoid disease transmission. At a rural Washington hospital, the post-pathogenic exposure policy was not regularly reviewed, creating a potentially dangerous safety hazard. Poor safety culture has been shown to increase organizational mistrust and increase workplace injuries.

Methods: Quantitative and qualitative data was acquired to assess the safety culture in this organization. Lewin's Change Theory was used as the process method for interventions

Intervention: Baseline data regarding organizational safety culture was assessed through an anonymous questionnaire given to the staff prior to intervention initiation. Post-exposure prophylaxis policy was thoroughly revised for accuracy and clarity. An education program was implemented using state-of-the-science information on post-pathogen exposure safety. Post-intervention questionnaires were used to assess employee knowledge regarding post-exposure protocol and perceptions of organizational safety.

Results: An increase in post-exposure knowledge and an enhanced focus on safety within the organization occurred according to the post-intervention questionnaires. Additionally, there were no occupational exposures during the intervention or in the post-intervention period assessed

Conclusion: Annual edits will guarantee treatment pathways remain current. Staff education and leadership enthusiasm regarding policy changes positively influenced their perceived value.

Future organizational interventions may benefit from a similar multi-faceted approach.