



Supporting Physicians and Staff Involved in Adverse Events

Everyone has a role in Patient Safety

Ensure Staff and Physicians Get Support

We know we have a duty to our physicians and staff to support them. If someone isn't accountable for this, it is so easy to drop.

It's crucial that someone check in on everyone who was involved. It's hard to predict who will be suffering silently.

It needs to be somebody's responsibility to phone or drop in every two weeks until we are absolutely certain that the physicians and staff are well on the road to recovery.

Having a senior representative and even the CEO come by and show their support for the unit and its work, was very important – not just for a few individuals, but for others who work in the unit and saw it happen.

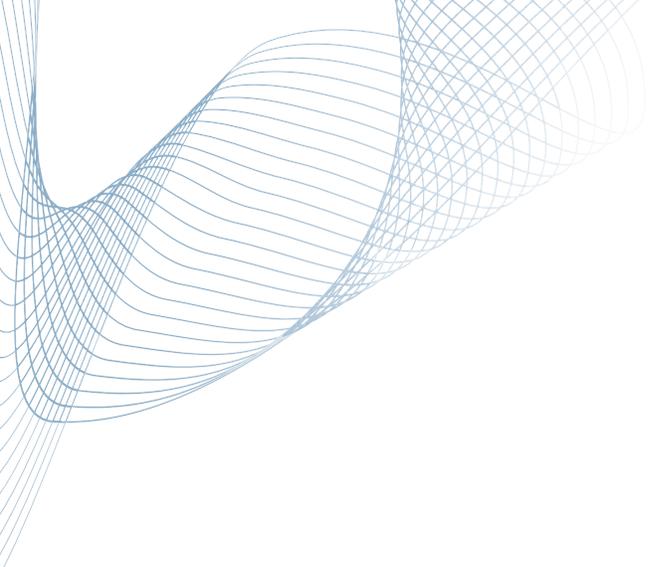
Talking with people who have been through it can be the most helpful thing.

Some departments have set up informal clubs where physicians can come and talk and support each other in a safe environment.

After an investigation of an event, it's important to touch base with the healthcare team and everyone involved so they can get some closure. This is an important part of the healing process that we have neglected too often.

It's important our providers don't get lost in the cracks.

We can be devastated and start to doubt our abilities. It might mean that we have difficulty making decisions. It can change how we practice. It isn't good for our patients.



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Denial is Common

As physicians we view needing help as a sign of weakness. It's part of our medical culture. The person supporting physicians must be attuned to the physician culture.

Most of the time we don't particularly want support. We might need it but we don't volunteer to get it.

My greatest source of support came from the person that was mentoring me, but I never would have reached out for it.

We can't mandate support, but we can formalize a process to ensure staff and physicians are contacted on a regular basis.

Support for Physicians and Staff May Include

- Conversations with sympathetic peers who have been through a similar event
- Offers from persons with experience to help with difficult conversations with patients
- Support from mentors and leaders
- Support from spiritual leaders
- Paid leaves to allow for a period to recover
- Professional psychological intervention
- Information to know what has happened and what to expect next