

“ As frontline staff, we are often at the sharp end of competing priorities... Almost invariably, it is the most vulnerable patients who can't speak up for themselves, or the patients who don't have visitors, who lose out. They are the ones whose meal times are interrupted, and who get moved for non-clinical reasons, often in the middle of the night. This is why it is so important that the people who run hospitals carefully think through, and articulate to themselves and their staff, what the hospital is for and whose needs and priorities matter most. ”

Karen Sanders, Senior Staff Nurse,
North Bristol NHS Trust

© The Point of Care Foundation, 2013
Cover photo: © Clare Kendall, Telegraph Media Group Limited, 2007.

About us


The Point of Care Foundation is an independent charity working to improve patients' experience of care and increase support for the staff who work with them.

We aim to become a leading source of information and practical solutions for organisations providing health and social care.

Jocelyn Cornwell, Director, founded the Point of Care programme at The King's Fund in 2007. After training in medical sociology and ethnography, she worked in academic research, as a senior manager in NHS community health services and in healthcare regulation, first at the Audit Commission and then at the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) where she was director of policy and deputy chief executive.

She is a visiting professor in the Department of Medicine at Imperial College London.

The Point of Care Foundation
11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0AN.
020 7637 7252
info@pointofcarefoundation.org.uk
www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk

 @PointofCareFdn
Registered charity number: 1151628

The Point of Care Foundation

Improving the experience of care for patients and staff



 The Point of Care Foundation

Good care is linked to a positive experience

When people are ill or depend on others to look after them, it is of fundamental importance that they are cared for with kindness and compassion by everyone they come into contact with.

Good communication and rapport can aid in the healing process. The goal of improving the experience of patients is not just morally right, but makes sense clinically and in terms of value for money.



Staff experience affects patient care

The capacity of individual staff members to respond sensitively to patients is always at risk. Although research has shown that staff want to deliver the same quality of care they would want for themselves and their families, they often feel prevented from doing so because of the pressures of their jobs and because of the systems and routines in their work settings. Work pressures can lead to staff experiencing stress, guilt and a lack of empathy.

What are Schwartz Center Rounds®?

Developed by the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare in the USA, Schwartz Center Rounds are now running in over 30 organisations in the UK. Rounds provide a structured, monthly one-hour forum for staff from all disciplines to discuss difficult emotional and social issues that arise in caring for patients. The discussions are confidential and take place in a safe environment. Their purpose is not to solve problems, but to explore the human aspects of delivering care and the challenges that staff face.

At the start of a Round, a panel made up of two or three staff members, normally from different disciplines, will present a story about a particular patient or dilemma. They may focus, for example, on how it felt giving bad news or being caught between the patient and their family. The Rounds facilitator then leads a discussion with the wider group.

Evidence suggests that when staff feel positive about the care they are offering and feel supported in providing care, this is beneficial for them, patients, and the organisation as a whole. Specifically:

- improving the health and well-being of staff can help to improve the quality of patients' experience of care
- organisations known to be committed to supporting their staff are better able to engage with them in making improvements of all kinds
- Staff involved in Rounds report that their capacity to provide compassionate care increased and that relationships and team-working improved.

“ People are taking the concerns of staff seriously – opening ourselves to hear what people are struggling with. And in the context of Mid-Staffs – staff are expressing things, and the Rounds are a sign that it is safe to speak. It is all very well to say we have an open culture, but this demonstrates that value. ”

Schwartz Center Round® participant

How can the Point of Care Foundation help?

We offer expert advice on how to establish successful Schwartz Rounds programmes to organisations that wish to run them. We train and mentor the Rounds facilitators, offer evaluation support and quality assure Rounds programmes once they are up and running.

