

A Little R.E.S.P.E.C.T.



Cultivating a culture of respect and trust among staff is important to the success of an organisation. It can also be a big factor in improving patient care, as shown by the experience of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital.

At NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, executives found that cultivating a “culture of respect” among staff meant simply listening to employee concerns, said Laura L. Forese, MD, the hospital’s executive vice president and chief operating officer.

“We asked people what would really make a difference, and the word ‘respect’ came up over and over and over again,” Dr. Forese noted. “That’s when it started to click for us that we needed to take that on and make that a priority in everything that we do.”

The hospital’s respect culture is based on these key elements: treating everyone as a “valued human being” and honouring their contribution to patient care. A feedback mechanism enables hospital leaders to fine-tune their approach to cultivating respect and trust, not just between team members, but also between clinical and nonclinical staff.

Success in this area requires buy-in from the top down, according to Dr. Forese. Employees must be made aware that the culture shift is important to them. In addition, NewYork-Presbyterian also posts reminders across the hospital, both at the individual unit level and at each level of management.

Leaders also include nonclinical staff in discussions when appropriate. For example, Dr. Forese said ER executives spoke with a housekeeper about her thoughts on a patient’s care, as she had watched the patient throughout the day.

So far, results have been positive. Recent surveys indicate that 75 percent of staff recognise efforts the hospital has made to improve respect and trust between employees. However, there is more work to be done in engaging physicians on the issue, Dr. Forese added.

Respect and trust leads to improved teamwork and communication between clinicians, which have been shown to reduce mistakes in the emergency department and improve patient safety. Recent research suggests that improved teamwork between physicians can save patients’ lives. CEOs who want to implement a culture change in their organisations should set a clear direction for change and challenge employees to examine processes.

Source: [FierceHealthcare](#)
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