Tea trolley teaching: the what, why and benefits

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'Bath tea trolley training' as an innovative method for delivering multidisciplinary training in the workplace

Prone position ventilation: a quality improvement project

'Bath tea trolley training' is a novel method of training that we have developed in Bath, UK over the past 3 years, and which we have used extremely successfully to provide multidisciplinary training in the workplace in our intensive care unit (ICU). It involves loading up a trolley with educational material on the top, and a pot of tea on the bottom: this trolley then travels around the ICU, with 1-2 trainers, providing 5-10 minute teaching sessions to ICU staff in their workplace during their usual working day (or even night shift!), followed by a cup of tea!

We have found that this teaching method works very well for practical procedures (eg airway rescue manoeuvres), new protocols and policies (both new protocols and to refresh existing ones, eg major incident plans, major haemorrhage protocols) and even for electronic prescribing. To date we have run 18 projects in Bath--in the ICU, operating theatres, delivery suite and on the general wards, and have trained >700 staff using this method at the time of writing. We have 6 more projects planned for 2018.

Benefits of this teaching method are numerous:

- **Quick and easy to set up**
- **Minimal cost** – all equipment already in the department
- **Brings training to the staff**, in their workplace, during their normal working shifts – no need for study leave time and money
- **Complements existing training programmes** – allows additional opportunities to practise practical procedures (eg airway skills), and in doing so prevents 'skill decay'
- **Effective multidisciplinary training** – by training together as a team, we've seen huge benefits in morale, communication and human factors
- **Can reach large numbers of staff very quickly** –many of our 'Bath tea trolley' projects have arisen following a critical incident or 'near-miss' and have allowed additional training and/or consolidating training quickly and effectively
- **Transferable and reproducible** - we are aware of ten other UK hospitals who have successfully used this training method
- **Feedback is collected immediately after training** (and in return for that cup of tea!) - in all of our projects, 98-100% of the 700 staff

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members trained have reported an increase in confidence of 1 point or more on a 5 point Likert scale, and all requested additional training using the same method, plus recommended this training method to other departments/hospitals
- **Flexible method of training** – can be adjusted according to grade and experience of the staff member being taught, and can be adjusted to one to one training sessions, groups of 2-3 staff, or small group training sessions
- **It's fun!** – both for those receiving the training and for those doing the teaching.

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Zoom On

What is your top management tip?

I don't really have one. Generally just stay calm in a crisis and be kind is a good starting point. Treating your colleagues well is never going to turn out badly.

What would you single out as a career highlight?

Honestly, my career highlight was actually a career break being a ski bum for a whole season then volunteering as a medic on the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge search and rescue team. Not every job gives you the chance to take time out to do the things you've always wanted to do.

If you had not chosen this career path you would have become a...?

…..mechanic fixing old camper vans. Fixing people and fixing vans probably isn't that different.

What are your personal interests outside of work?

Skiing and anything that lets me spend time in my camper van.

Your favourite quote?

People keep ruining my favourite quotes by putting them over dodgy backgrounds on social media and making them sound too cheesy! 80s power ballads are always very inspiring.

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