Building Social Resilience in Providers, Patients, Families, and Systems: SRM's Skills-Based Approach for Healthcare Practitioners (P09)

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Objectives

- Describe and explore how emerging neuroscience principles can be applied to identify and alleviate stress, distress, and trauma and build resilience in healthcare clinicians and systems.
- Identify domains of stress/distress/trauma symptoms particular to the healthcare setting.
- Describe three ways neuroscience concepts can be applied to the systems level.

Healthcare systems, like so many other enterprises in today’s complex, highly networked world, are immersed in the impact of disruptive change. This calls for timely strategies that build adaptable and flexible workplaces that foster the well-being and resilience of staff and patients. Thriving depends upon capacity to anticipate, improvise, adapt, and overcome. Research from neuroscience and brain imaging has led to new understandings about the impact of stress, distress, and trauma on the human mind-body system. The essential role of the nervous system in responding to threat and fear and its capacity to rebound from distressing events has been scientifically well documented. The workshop presents key neuroscience concepts relevant to enhancing resilience in healthcare administrators, workers, and their patients, enabling participants to develop a neurobiological lens as part of a “well-being toolkit.”

The Social Resilience Model (SRM) is a neurobiologically oriented set of skills designed to teach practical ways to stabilize the human nervous system, build resilience, and reduce and/or prevent the symptoms of stress, distress, and trauma. This workshop will discuss how SRM skills can be used for the self-care of healthcare workers and work teams who are exposed to challenging situations (e.g., patient pain and fear; family members’ reactivity [anger, despair]; moral distress and burnout; traumatic sights, sounds, and smells) as well as for individuals who are directly experiencing events that are sad or frightening. SRM skills target workers’ capacity to foster compassion, cooperation, awareness, and understanding with regard to the management of chronic suffering and the mortality we all share.

These same principles and tools can assist an organization in promoting resilience at a systems level, strengthening the potential for flexibility and problem solving.