A Program’s Experience with Healer’s Art: Fostering Compassionate Healing and Human Connection

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Wellness and Burnout

• Physician burnout may jeopardize patient care
  o Patient safety
  o Quality of care
    • Seen predominantly in residents and early career physicians
  o Patient satisfaction

• Efforts to improve physician wellness are encouraged and essential
  o Residency Programs and Health Care Organizations
Remen Institute for Health and Illness (RISHI)

• Remen Institute for the Study of Health and Illness
  o Founded in 1991 by Rachel Naomi Remen, MD
  o Became part of the WSU Boonshoft School of Medicine in 2016

• Provides education and support for health care professionals

• Focuses primarily on:
  o Practicing a medicine of service
  o Human connection
  o Compassionate healing
The Healer’s Art

• Offers safe learning environment for personal exploration of service, healing relationship, reverence for life and compassionate care

• Uncover and strengthen altruistic values, sense of calling and intention to serve

• Discovery model course in values clarification and professionalism
  o Aimed at 1st and 2nd year medical students
  o Offered at 70-75 US medical schools
  o Implemented at 2 Residency Programs currently
The Healer’s Art

- 15 hour course, consisting of 5 sessions
  - Discovering and Nurturing Your Wholeness
  - Honoring Loss
  - Sharing Grief: The Healing of Loss
  - Beyond Analysis: Allowing Awe in Medicine
  - The Care of the Soul: Service as a Way of Life

"First and foremost we are people helping people. ...Only then are we doctors helping patients."
—FIRST-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENT
Residency Program Involvement

• Started at Dayton Children’s during 2017-2018 academic year
• Support of program faculty and hospital administrators
  o Protected time for residents to attend during didactics
  o Faculty involvement as mentors
• Integrated course into core curriculum
Methods

• Course evaluations, previously validated for medical student course, completed after 5th session

• Evaluations had 2 parts:
  o Likert-type scale ratings of course and faculty
  o Written comments about course impact

• Mean scores to summarize responses

• Thematic analysis of written responses
Results

Demographics:
• Survey Response Rate: 24/31 (77.4%)
• 70.6% Female, 20.6% Male, 8.8% Prefer not to say
• Average age 27.1 years
Resident Perceptions of Healers’ Art Participation Outcomes

Healers’ Art...

- Small Group Experience Similar to Other Small Group Experiences: 2.7
- Provides Education Not Elsewhere in Curriculum: 4.3

As a Result of This Course I...

- Am More Supportive of Peers/Classmates: 4.5
- Am More Clear what I can Offer to Patients: 4
- Am More Certain I Belong in this Profession: 4.1
- Understand Better what Being a Good Doctor Entails: 3.9
- Am More Confident I can be a Good Doctor: 3.6
- Am More Committed to Patient Centered Care: 4
- Am More Committed to Medicine: 3.8

5 Point Likert Scale

Strongly Disagree | Neutral | Strongly Agree

Dayton Children’s School of Medicine
Wright State University
Recommend HA to Other Residents?

- Yes: 4.3%
- No: 95.7%

Promise/Commitment to Patient Care

- Yes: 8.3%
- No: 91.7%

Should HA be a Required Course?

- Yes: 40%
- No: 60%

Remember/Reinforce Lessons from Course

- Yes: 38.1%
- No: 61.9%
Results – Key Themes

• Small Group Experience
  o Demonstrated shared learning model
  o Engaged emotional learning and created sense of community

“[Small groups] averaged the playing field in that the attending wasn’t an attending, and an upper level didn’t know more than me”

“Gave me the chance to learn from and about those around me”

“Honest and open hearted”
Results – Key Themes

• Valuable Lessons Learned
  o Despite diverse backgrounds, all can relate with the common experience of hardship
  o Emotions and our experiences are important to share with one another to build resilience and community
  o Commitment to presence and the care of the whole person

“Everyone has hardships, though they are not always apparent or visible”

“Hardships are everywhere, but love is too”

“Other residents are going through similar things and I can lean on them”

“Even in a hard time, I can get through it”

“I will be more present for my patient’s and my fellow residents”

“I will believe in the power of my patient’s and mine potential”
Results – Key Themes

• Challenges to Adapting Healer’s Art to a Residency Program
  o Appropriateness for implementing for Interns compared to Senior Residents
  o Time and emotional requirement for course conflicts with patient care responsibilities

“I feel it would be more useful for PGY2-3 as interns do not have many professional experiences yet to discuss and reflect on”

“So many time demands, and I have to go write notes after this”

“Taking time out for the course is really stressful, especially on emotional course days and then trying to go back to work”
Questions?
References


