

# HELPING CLINICIANS HELP PATIENTS

Facilitating the  
Transition into the  
Clinical Learning  
Environment

**CPR**

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## Chapter 7

# LOOKING FORWARD

Chapter 7 discusses the importance of investing in well-being and resilience as an integral part of clinician training. It identifies the components that led to the MedRAP program's 25 years of success and suggests the important elements essential for the development of comparable programs such as CPR.

## CHAPTER 7:

# LESSONS LEARNED AND LOOKING FORWARD

MedRAP has greatly evolved and benefited from the lessons learned during the 25 years of its implementation. Lessons learned have been continuously incorporated into the program design. For the Clinician Program for Resilience (CPR) to be effective, it needs multiple, well-trained facilitators with strong group skills, medical knowledge, and understanding of organizational theory. Medical institutions need to promote the well-being and resilience of a wide range of medical clinicians by investing in training programs and allocating resources to train effective facilitators to lead them. Implementing such programs will benefit both medical institutions as well as clinicians.

For similar programs to be successful, it is instrumental to have the following attributes:

- Identify needs and goals for participants and management.
- Secure high-level management support for the program.
- Demonstrate that the program is cost-effective and contributes to recruitment.
- Foster a safe environment to ensure honest feedback and self-reflection.
- Develop trusting relationships with program management so clinicians can be assured of honest communication without fear of retribution.
- Involve faculty so they feel part of the process by, for example:
  - Serving as facilitators;
  - Serving on a task force to provide feedback on program design;
  - Formulating and evaluating goals and objectives;
  - Testing the efficacy of the program;
  - Evaluating the attainment of competencies.
- Create flexibility for facilitators to identify and utilize the elements of the program that are most helpful for the specific needs of their target population.
- It is important to keep the groups demographically diverse, and to ensure that the mentors and group leaders are diverse as well, so that each participant has an opportunity to find a role model.
- Use the mechanisms suggested in the previous chapters to minimize potential conflicts among group leaders so they can function collaboratively.
- Utilize ongoing feedback systems to ensure that the program continues to meet real rather than assumed needs in subsequent years.
- Involving administration and healthcare team management from each affiliated hospital in the CQI presentations is important for their understanding that

- implementation of such programs is a cost-effective way to improve hospital efficiency and patient care.
- While conducting the annual CQI presentations to hospital and healthcare team management, begin with a thorough review of the previous year’s suggested solutions, including those that were implemented and those that require additional work.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

An effective program to improve the well-being and resilience of clinicians should provide a safe place for them to express their grievances. Almost half of clinicians worry about being labeled a “troublemaker” if they complain or raise concerns about their training program. Therefore, a confidential, supportive environment provides a place where constructive change can be discussed, and where facilitators are not evaluators.

### Safe Environment Factor

One of the key advantages of having operationally independent facilitators is their contribution to the safe environment factor. The safe environment provided by MedRAP at BCM positively impacted residents’ ability to communicate problems they were experiencing in the hospital wards, the inefficiencies they noticed in the hospital system and patient care, and challenges in the development of their own skills and competencies. The honest communication also contributed to the prevention of similar problems in the future. The table below demonstrates how this impacts the program curriculum across the board.

### IMPORTANCE OF SAFE ENVIRONMENT

SKILLS/ COMPETENCIES	SAFE ENVIRONMENT FACTOR
Organizational Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinicians are more likely to report their own mistakes and problems they experience with healthcare team</li> </ul>

<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinicians are more likely to discuss negative feelings towards patients, families, faculty, and healthcare team</li> <li>• Clinicians are more likely to report situational or personal issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Continuous Quality Improvement/ Management Skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinicians are more likely to report problems in hospital efficiency and patient care without fearing repercussions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior clinicians are more likely to report negative experiences with senior clinicians</li> <li>• Clinicians more likely to reflect on their own weaknesses as leaders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Annual Evaluation and Planning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinicians were able to identify which components of the program worked and which did not, without worrying about communicating negative feedback to faculty who evaluate them</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

It is now widely accepted that formal wellness, resilience, and well-being programs such as CPR should be an integral component of clinician training for the following reasons:

- Programs to improve well-being and resilience are demonstrably effective and create a supportive community where clinicians can feel less isolated, which increases self-compassion, leads to decreased burnout, and improves the overall delivery, efficiency, and effectiveness of care.
- Clinicians are highly receptive to such programs.
- Participation in such sessions has been correlated with higher clinician empathy and enhanced professional development.
- Well-being and resilience are associated with reduced anxiety, depression, and burnout among healthcare professionals.
- It is possible to anticipate problems clinicians are likely to encounter in their transitions to the clinical learning environment, and to prepare them to respond

effectively, thus accelerating their learning curve.

- The current generation prioritizes their quality of life and strives for a balance between personal and professional life; they are mindful of ethical considerations related to their work and highly value the importance of well-being for themselves and their patients.
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its unanticipated long-term effects makes it more important to prepare future clinicians to handle similar crises.
- For CPR to be *effective*, it needs facilitators with strong group skills, medical knowledge, and understanding of organizational theory.

As the management testimonials demonstrate, MedRAP was found to be beneficial for participants and hospital management. Once the program is established, facilitators will find it relatively simple to customize the program annually to meet changing needs, as was done successfully at BCM for 25 years.