Mental Wellbeing for healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic

The demands health care workers continue to face in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital that health systems and health care organization understand the possible stressors and create an infrastructure to provide support to their care team members.

COMMUNICATION

- Keep staff abreast of important information especially when directives change
- Establish a mechanism where staff can share their concerns, questions with leadership which allows review and prompt response by leadership
- Keep communication honest, empathetic and compassionate; Resource on Vital Talk website: https://www.vitaltalk.org/guides/covid-19-communication-skills/
- Incorporate ongoing ways to share positive or encouraging news with staff as well. Ideas include kudos to staff members, uplifting patient care stories, announcement of local donations to the department from local restaurants, etc.

MAINTAIN BALANCE

- Leadership should closely monitor the time that health care team members are spending in direct patient care
- Attempt to limit the overall volume of emails, phone calls and alerts to avoid information burden
- Respect staffs' time off; allow them to disconnect and recharge

Reference: Four Ways to Help Prevent Physician, Staff Burnout During COVID-19; March 26,2020 (Premier, 2020)
https://www.premierinc.com/newsroom/blog/four-ways-to-help-prevent-physician-staff-burnout-during-covid-19

Monitoring the Mental Wellbeing of Health Care Team
Leadership's monitoring and assessment of staffs' mental health and wellbeing is important during this crisis and after. The Department of Veterans Affairs published the following resource for healthcare organizations "Managing Healthcare Workers' Stress Associated with COVID-19 Virtus Outbreak:
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID19ManagingStressHCW032020.pdf