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The cost of caring: Hospital teaching staff, compassion, fatigue and burnout risk

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Teachers’ concerns about students with health conditions

Locard's Exchange Principle

States that when an offender comes in contact with a location or another person, an exchange of evidence occurs (Saferstein, 1998). As a result of this exchange, the offender both leaves something of themselves behind and takes something of the victim or place away with them when they leave.

Trauma and Psychological Disorders

Injury/Incident

Normal Trauma Response

Acute Stress Disorder

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Adjustment Disorder

Normal Functioning
Secondary Trauma and Psychological Disorders

Exposure to Traumatised Clients

Normal Response

Vicarious Traumatisation

Compassion Fatigue/Burnout

Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder/
Traumatic countertransference

Normal Functioning
Glossary

• **Compassion Satisfaction**
  – Positive aspects of working as a helper

• **Compassion Fatigue**
  – Negative aspects of working as a helper

• **Burnout**
  – Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed

• **Work-related traumatic stress**
  – Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
  – Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person
Professional Quality of Life

Compassion Satisfaction
The positive aspects of helping
“The good stuff”
e.g., “I get satisfaction from being able to help people”
“I feel invigorated after working with those I teach.”

Compassion Fatigue
The negative aspects of helping
“The bad stuff”
e.g., “I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a teacher.”
“I feel trapped by my job as a teacher.”
Compassion Satisfaction- Compassion Fatigue Model

Professional Quality of Life

Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion Fatigue

Burnout

Secondary Trauma
Measuring CS & CF: The
*Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)*

The ProQOL is a free measure.

- A 30 item self report measure of the positive and negative aspects of caring
- The ProQOL measures Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue
- Compassion Fatigue has two subscales
  - Burnout
  - Secondary Trauma
WA Hospital School Services

• Hospital School Services (HSS) provides educational support for students whose physical or mental health prevents them from successfully participating in their own school programs;

• Support is available to both public and private school students.
Hospital School Services

• 32 valid replies (44% return rate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compassion Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>38.75</td>
<td>6.59</td>
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<td><strong>Burnout</strong></td>
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<td>10.00</td>
<td>34.00</td>
<td>18.81</td>
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<td><strong>Secondary Traumatic Stress</strong></td>
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<td>30.00</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>6.26</td>
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Compassion Satisfaction

25th %ile: 44

75th %ile: 57

Mean = 50.00
Std. Dev. = 10.00
N = 32
Burnout

- 25th %ile: 43
- 75th %ile: 56
Secondary Traumatic Stress

25th %le
42

75th %le
56

Mean = 50.00
Std. Dev. = 10.00
N = 32
## Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Compassion Satisfaction</th>
<th>Burnout</th>
<th>Compassion Fatigue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia teachers*</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>33.15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Health Providers^</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HSS</strong></td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
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*Exploring Career Satisfaction, Burnout, and Compassion Fatigue as Indicators of the Quality of Career Engagement of Public School Educators by Beth Colleen Robinson, Dissertation submitted to the College of Human Resources and Education at West Virginia University

^ The Experience of Secondary Traumatic Stress Upon Care Providers Working Within a Children's Hospital, by Robins, P., Meltzer, L. & Zelikovsky, N. (2009)
Team Participation
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<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Compassion Satisfaction</th>
<th>Burnout</th>
<th>Secondary Traumatic Stress</th>
<th>SLATE Team</th>
<th>SLATE Drs Leadership</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Compassion Satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>-0.76**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Traumatic Stress</td>
<td>-0.67**</td>
<td>0.74**</td>
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<td>SLATE Team</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>-0.43*</td>
<td>-0.53**</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLATE Drs Leadership</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>-0.53**</td>
<td>-0.43*</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLATE Participation</td>
<td>0.37*</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>0.56**</td>
<td>0.45*</td>
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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Resiliency Planning

• Individual, personally
  – The ProQOL can help you plan where to put your energy to increase our resilience

• Organizational planning
  – Can help organizations find ways to maximize the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects of helping

• Supportive Supervision
  – The ProQOL can be used as information for discussions
Hospital School Teachers are at similar risk to other paediatric health carers, but that risk is possibly similar to other school staff. Hospital Schools should have regular reviews of staff health and wellbeing, and investigate resilience programs and team participation training.

Teachers that do not feel positively about their role in the health care team may be at greater risk of lower compassion satisfaction and/or higher risk of secondary stress and burnout.