

Research Library Publication

HeartMath Best Practices Conference, 17 Abstracts

30 Healthcare Organizations from the United States and Europe

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Introduction

Fairfield Medical Center is a 222-bed community hospital located in Lancaster, Ohio. Organizational leadership chose to invest in the Transforming Stress Workshop, a 6-hour workshop with a 2-hour follow-up workshop, in order to improve the well-being of its staff and physicians.

Special thought and consideration were given to being able to sustain any benefits and/or improvements long-term. As a result, strategies were developed to integrate the program into our culture.

Methods:

Four staff members from a variety of disciplines were selected and sent to HeartMath Train-the-Trainer to gain proficiency in HeartMath methodology and tools, expanding their duties to deliver the classes. Biweekly workshops were offered from August 2007 through December 2010, educating a total of 975 employees, or 48% of the staff.

Other tactics providing a sustainable program included senior leadership support and championing, management team training, positive employee comments

published internally, use of tools in committee and department meetings, incorporation into orientation and on-boarding processes, part of major initiative roll-outs, element in clinical ladder, expansion to include Transforming Team Workshops, sharing of Participant and Organizational Quality Assessment-Revised data, a lead HeartMath instructor who provides consulting to other organizations, provision of classes to local educators, and open workshops for employee family members.

Results:

Three metrics were selected to measure the success of the program: employee satisfaction, absenteeism rates, and healthcare claims cost. Statistically significant cultural and financial return on investment were demonstrated. Employees who received HeartMath training experienced a 2:1 savings on healthcare claims as compared to employees who had not received training. Employee Opinion Survey results demonstrated that employees who had HeartMath training had higher overall satisfaction scores than those who had not received training (Table and Figure) HeartMath participants demonstrated a lower overall absenteeism rate ($P = 0$), resulting in a \$94,794 savings over a 3-year period. Cultural and financial returns on investment were demonstrated using these indicators.

Conclusion:

Investing in HeartMath training and ongoing practice has proven to be a wise decision and continues to be valuable when initiating new concepts in a stressful, changing environment. Sustainability is key to long-term success and true cultural change. Continued employee training of the HeartMath tools and the continued use of the tools enriches the program planning and implementation of new initiatives at Fairfield Medical Center.