Mental Health Awareness for Healthcare Workers

Mental health heavily impacts people's overall health and wellbeing. Healthcare workers have the opportunity to be in the frontline to identify symptoms and help address these issues.

Step 1 Recognize specific mental health signs and when to refer

a Evaluate if several of the following symptoms occur

- Sleep or appetite changes
- Withdrawal
- Apathy
- Mood changes
- Problems thinking
- Nervousness

b Evaluate using the below list, if the symptoms cause destruction to a patient's daily life

- Frequency
- Intensity
- Duration
- Functional impairment

c If disruption is caused to a patient's daily life, mental health support and referrals are needed

Look out specifically for, and refer those with:

- Pre-existing mental health symptoms (symptoms may likely worsen)
- Suicidal thoughts or actions

Step 2 Support patients with mental health signs and symptoms

Don'ts   **Do's**

When people are stressed and anxious, they often need someone to listen. Here are some simple but effective tips:

Active Listening

Do's
- Try to understand the patient's experience better
- Give your full attention without distraction
- Find as private and calming of an environment as possible

Don'ts
- Try to solve the patient's problem and give advice immediately
- Be distracted by your phone, computer, or work
- Have the conversation in a loud, busy area

Responding

Do's
- Be hopeful and realistic
- Acknowledge individual experiences
- Give accurate information and admit when you don't know

Don'ts
- Give false promises and assurances
- Compare the patient to others
- Speculate and guess about information

Encourage the following coping skills to help them to continue or regain normal life and stay physically and mentally healthy

- Create a routine (sleeping, eating, waking)
- Continue hobbies and socializing
- Ensure relaxation throughout the day
- Practice exercise and movement

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