



INTRODUCING ‘THE PAUSE’ PRACTICE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL CODE TEAM: A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Initial introduction of The Pause practice resulted in no change in measured healthcare worker resiliency. Phase 2 implementation cycle is currently underway.

BACKGROUND

- Burnout has become an internationally recognized issue requiring attention within the field of medicine
- In-hospital patient death can pose a serious challenge to healthcare provider resiliency - contributing to burnout, depression, and work dissatisfaction in healthcare
- The Pause is a simple, accessible practice implemented immediately following a patient death. It is a post-resuscitation, 30-60 second moment of silence in the room
- This practice is designed to honor both the patient’s life and acknowledge the team’s efforts. Thus it may provide an early opportunity to begin the healing process after the challenging experience of a resuscitation that ended in death
- Theorized that The Pause could be a useful tool in protecting healthcare worker resiliency in a setting where patient deaths are often unavoidable
- It has been recommended that The Pause be instituted at Magnet hospitals (World Congress Leadership Summit for Chief Nursing Officers, Chicago, 2006)

METHODS

- Quality improvement project design
- Introduced the practice of The Pause to the code team at University of Colorado Hospital
- Measured The Pause’s effect on resiliency by surveying code team members during implementation of The Pause
- Healthcare worker resiliency was measured using the Brief Resiliency Coping Scale (BRS), a validated brief survey that aims to quantify resiliency and coping ability

Statement 1. The Pause

“Let’s take a moment to Pause and honor this person. This was someone who was alive and now has passed away. They loved and were loved. They were someone’s friend and family member. In our own way and in silence let us take a moment to honor this person and the valiant efforts made on their behalf.”

Table 1. Brief Resiliency Coping Scale Statements

BRS Statement
1. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.
2. I have a hard time making it through stressful events.
3. It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.
4. It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.
5. I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.
6. I tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in my life.

Table 2. BRS Score Interpretation

Average BRS Score	Interpretation
1.00-2.99	Low resilience
3.00-4.30	Normal resilience
4.31-5.00	High resilience

RESULTS

Table 3. BRS Score Results

Sample Group	BRA Average Composite	Score Interpretation
Early Implementation	3.8485	Normal resilience
Ongoing Implementation	3.0862	Normal resilience

Table 4. Respondent Demographics

Sample group	Date	Respondent Majority Role	Respondents	Mode Codes
Early	Mar – Apr 2022	Registered Nurse (54.55%)	11	1 – 5 codes
Ongoing	May – Aug 2022	Respiratory Therapist (82.35%)	17	1 – 5 codes, 5 – 10 codes

LIMITATIONS

- Difficult nature of quantifying resilience
- Project designed as QI, not as standardized experiment
 - Unpaired survey responses
 - No standardized education nor regulation of practice – original creator designed The Pause to be spread and experienced organically
- Pre-existing knowledge/practice of The Pause
- Uneven representation of respondents
- COVID-19 pandemic’s pervasive impact on resiliency of healthcare workers

CONCLUSIONS

- There was no substantial shift in healthcare worker resiliency after The Pause was introduced as measured by the BRS scale. Scores remained at a “normal resiliency” level.
- It may be possible that The Pause supports a culture of resiliency that may already exist in the UCH setting.
- Further research is warranted to explore the additional effects of The Pause practice and its potential for affecting healthcare worker resilience.
- Additionally, there is potential for additional research in how healthcare worker resiliency differs between unit roles.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- A second implementation/data collection cycle is currently underway.
- Includes BRS questionnaire, as well as additional data about The Pause implementation (ie. asking the respondent if they have participated in vs initiated The Pause and over what time period)
- Will also include a free text box for responses to an open-ended question soliciting feedback, questions, comments, or concerns.
- Efforts being made to improve survey response numbers and diversity.