Distressed Physicians, Disruptive Behaviour – Lessons Learned

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Faculty / presenter disclosure

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Scope of problems presented to physician health programs

1960’s
- ‘Impairment’ substance use disorders

1970’s
- Depression, other mental health disorders

1980’s
- Other potentially ‘impairing’ conditions

1990’s
- ‘Disruptive doctor,’ behavioural issues, stress & burnout, physician well-being

2000’s
- Prevention, health promotion, renewal, career counselling, coaching
In the beginning…

‘Disruptive doctors include perpetrators of certain behaviours as well as those with disagreeable personalities…’
Disruptive behaviour
Disruptive behaviour
Definition

‘Personal conduct (words, actions, or inactions) beyond that normally accepted as respectful interpersonal behaviour, which disturbs the work environment and/or potentially poses a risk to delivery of safe and quality healthcare’

Health Quality Council of Alberta, March 2013
Prevalence

• 1%- 5% (Linney, 1997)
• 3% – 5% (Leape & Fromson, 2006)
• 6% of physicians have >25 complaints on same theme in 5 years (Hickson, 2002)
Impact of DB

• Recruitment & retention
• Decreases productivity
• Communication
• Relationships
• Leaders
• Preventable patient outcomes
• Index physician
• Families
• Regulatory/legal
Stakeholders

• Physicians
• Medical staff organizations
• Physician leaders
• Physician health programs
• Regulatory bodies
• CMPA & hospital legal counsel
• Non-physician colleagues
‘Causes’ of disruptive behaviour?

• Axis II?
• Axis I
• Stressors
• Burnout, compassion fatigue
• The ‘dark side’
Is there a classic DBP profile?

• Very skilled
• Expert in their field
• Busy & champion for their patients
• Fear of uncertainty
• ‘Disabling’ perfectionism
• Isolated
• Lack of insight
Insight & disruptive behaviour
The ‘insight’ gap

We judge ourselves by our intentions

We judge others by their impact
Leadership

Feedback creates change
Disruptive behavior pyramid


No Δ
Pattern persists

Apparent pattern

Single “unprofessional" incidents (merit?)

Level 1 “awareness" intervention

Level 2 “authority" intervention

Level 3 “disciplinary" intervention

"Informal" cup of coffee intervention

Mandated issues

Vast majority of professionals-no issues
## Leadership - tools & skills

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Mary Yates
THANK YOU