



Poster Board 6:

Fostering Psychological Safety: Langs' Journey to a Healthier Workplace

Presenters:

• William Homerston	Manager of Quality, Performance and Innovation	Langs CHC
• Anne Gulliver	HR Generalist	Langs CHC
• Kelly Conrad	RN, Clinical Coordinator	Langs CHC
• Debbie Hollahan	CEO	Langs CHC

Description:

Explore Langs' approach to creating a psychologically safe workplace by fostering employee well-being, trust, and leadership development. Learn about our measurable outcomes and gain insights into building resilient and adaptable organizational cultures, with a particular emphasis on engaging leadership for support.

Session objectives and learning outcomes:

- Highlight Langs' Social and Wellness Program: Take a look at Langs' Social and Wellness Committee's initiatives, exploring events, program structure, and strategic planning. Gain an understanding of the program's components and its positive impact on employee well-being.
- Discuss a Top-Down Approach to Social Wellness: Examine the pivotal role of leadership commitment in fostering a socially and mentally healthy workplace. Understand how Langs has implemented a top-down approach, integrating social wellness practices throughout the organization to cultivate a positive and inclusive culture.
- Explore Evaluating Organizational Psychological Health and Safety: Gain insights into Langs' approach to assessing and enhancing organizational psychological health and safety. Discover practical strategies for evaluating and improving the psychological well-being of employees within your organization and offer suggestions of your own!

Full description:

Introduction

Langs, nestled in the communities of Cambridge and North Dumfries, Ontario, embarked on a transformative journey to elevate workplace culture, navigating the complexities posed by leadership changes, post-COVID staff turnover, and the persistent challenge of employee burnout.

Within this initiative lies a dedicated focus on our target population – the entire Langs team, comprising 126 individuals across diverse roles within our healthcare ecosystem. From healthcare practitioners and community workers to peer supporters, administrators, and management personnel, this amalgamation epitomizes the spirit of CHC's, fostering inclusivity and collaboration. In the face of contemporary challenges, Langs is not merely responding but actively shaping a workplace culture that resonates with resilience, adaptability, and a shared commitment to the well-being of both our staff and the communities we serve.

Challenge

The organization faced substantial challenges, including sudden leadership changes, post-COVID staff turnover, and signs of employee burnout. Recognizing the critical importance of addressing these issues, Langs initiated a comprehensive program to create a psychologically safe workplace. Moreover, with the unique complexity of operating across multiple satellite sites, the challenge extended beyond the immediate issues, emphasizing the need for a cohesive social and wellness strategy that could transcend organizational boundaries.

Action

At the heart of Langs' initiative lies a dedication to empower, instill autonomy, and cultivate trust among all employees. This commitment involves actively seeking staff input through suggestion boxes and surveys, fostering inclusivity in decision-making. Leadership training, a cornerstone, equips managers with essential skills to enhance their leadership capabilities, complemented by Critical Incident Debriefing Sessions for staff support in challenging situations.

Langs, committed to fostering a thriving workplace, continually reviews and updates its Wellness Strategy document. Endorsed by the senior leadership team, who all signed a commitment statement at the back of our strategic wellness plan, this dedication is fortified through the utilization of well-being surveys and leadership evaluations. These tools persistently track and enhance the ongoing progress of our initiative, ensuring alignment with our collective commitment to a supportive and evolving work culture.

Impact

Despite initial challenges, Langs adapted, achieving a 93% response rate in a targeted psychological well-being survey. Leadership workshops scored 8.5 out of 10 for effectiveness, with a 100% identification of actionable strategies. The Social and Wellness Committee organized 10 social and 6 wellness sessions since April 2023, demonstrating a 35% staff participation rate. The 'Intranet' Feedback button garnered 45 suggestions, 51% implemented.

Langs set specific objectives: a 5% increase in staff comfort reporting to managers, 100% leadership participation in a skill-enhancement

workshop, and aiming for staff turnover at or below 20%. Initial results revealed a baseline of 79% staff comfort in communicating concerns.

Qualitatively, employees noted an enhanced workplace environment and growing psychological safety. Testimonials from our psychological wellness survey reflect positive sentiments, emphasizing Langs' inclusive culture and prioritization of employee well-being, such as “I think the Langs CHC has the most inclusive, positively structured environments that I have ever worked in. We have many opportunities to grow and to share that growth to create change and continue to be relevant in our current social environment.”

Trajectory

Langs acknowledges the importance of ongoing measurement and adaptability. While anticipating an increase in the 79% score in the next survey, the organization focuses on sustaining positive trends, addressing potential engagement barriers, and fostering a workplace culture rooted in psychological safety and open communication. The integration of survey questions on client perception of staff satisfaction within client experience surveys is planned to gather valuable insights into the patient experience.

Langs places substantial emphasis on annual retention reports to discern trends and evaluate the impact of ongoing initiatives over prolonged periods. With a current voluntary turnover rate of 3%, the organization seeks to maintain a turnover rate at or below 20%, aligning with industry benchmarks.

Conclusion

Langs' commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace culture is evident throughout its transformative journey. Ongoing initiatives have sparked increased staff engagement, participation in organizational events, and growing comfort in sharing ideas. While awaiting further rounds of surveys, the small-scale initiatives symbolize the organization's dedication to cultivating an environment where staff feel increasingly comfortable expressing concerns or ideas to their managers.