

## Emotional Intelligence among Health Care Professionals

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### **Abstract:**

*Intelligence is generally regarded as a person's capacity to act rationally and effectively in a given environment. Traditionally Intelligence has always been thought to be very important to achieve success in life. Emotional intelligence is the capacity of a person to understand emotions and purposefully manage them, it means ability to understand and manage a person own feelings and emotions, also the feelings of those around them and respond appropriately. Emotions have often been considered motivational factors for success and happiness in a person's life. Understanding, controlling and management of emotions can be a major component of effective management of work and personal life. Emotional intelligence in healthcare settings is an important component of the competencies of the health professionals and quality of the service provided in the health institution. It is all the more important in the health industry because the health professionals are dealing with people who are under extreme emotional stress and may or may not be able to express these emotions. There are six important elements why emotional intelligence is an important quality to have for healthcare workers are Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Adaptability, Stress Management, General mood and Oneself-Motivation. Healthcare professionals with high emotional intelligence experience low levels of Professional exhaustion. That is, the emotional intelligence in health professionals and burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) are associate with each other.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Health care workers.

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### **I. Introduction:**

Intelligence is not an Honour, it's an aptitude, and you use it for the good of Humanity. Intelligence is generally regarded as a person's capacity to act rationally and effectively in a given environment. Traditionally Intelligence has always been thought to be very important to achieve success in life. However not all intelligent people are successful. Intelligence has many forms including verbal intelligence, spatial intelligence, social intelligence and emotional intelligence. Each of these proportions has its special features, uses, functions and importance for a person. Emotional intelligence is the capacity of a person to understand emotions and purposefully manage them, it means "the ability to understand and manage a person own feelings and emotions, also the feelings of those around them and respond appropriately".

Emotions have often been considered motivational factors for success and happiness in a person's life. Understanding, controlling and management of emotions can be a major component of effective management of work and personal life. Managing emotions does not mean suppressing, over-whelming or denying them. Handling of emotions within the environment of health care safety has a goal of constructively working with the emotions present in a clinical setting to ensure that they support, not occlude, patient safety. In emotional self-management and management of emotional position, emotions are correctly distinguished and brought into the reasoning approach. When individuals can realize their emotions, they are strongly able to control how those emotions affect their mental activities.

A person with a high Emotional intelligence is able to view a problem from different emotional perspectives and make a choice according to their emotions. An emotionally intelligent person is able to manage his or her emotions according to the circumstances, able to regulate and control their emotions and direct them towards achieving their goals of less stress. Persons who low in Emotional intelligence do not understand or know how to control their own emotions, and they don't know how to understand emotions of others. The professionals who battle to deal with stress, overcome obstacles and resolve conflict, or who fail to meet the needs of co-workers and customers, they are negative, blamers, procrastinators. Managing and dealing the emotions in professional environment is the key to professional success especially in professions where the major dealing is with people.

Healthcare is one such profession, physicians and nurses as well as other healthcare workers are the professionals who require to carry out their roles while dealing with people. Most of the health settings are too focused on the physical recovery of their patients. They neglect to see that these people are having emotional needs, that should be met as well. Emotion has extra meaning and relevance in the context of health care. In

many situations, health care workers actively protect themselves from sustaining too much empathy so as not to get too emotional. It's especially important in health care profession to find the balance in emotion: To communicate with persons, but also secure oneself from flattering inefficient due to over emotional feeling.

### **Emotional Intelligence in Healthcare Environment**

Emotional intelligence can be seen at work in different circumstances within health care settings. Hospitals, clinics, medical offices and other health care areas are the settings of an enormous human exhibition and burn up of emotions. Patients and their family members are in worry or trouble; they express their distress to health care workers who also experience their own emotions about their patients. It is also evident when the critical news needs to be delivered to patients and their family members. It's not just the number of patients each professional can handle when providing treatment, it's the amount and quality of emotions those patients express to that professionals and how they respond.

Healthcare service works with the cooperation and collaboration of physician's nurses, technicians, and contemporary team of professions who along with the patient work towards their welfare and regaining. It is therefore, much important that each one of them take over a responsible level of emotional quotient and people management skills for successful working of the team as a whole. Members of a health care team frequently they have to control their emotions and work together to achieve the quality outcome.

The health care professional workers have to handle the stress of their jobs and avoid creating any mistakes. They have to shuffle all their responsibilities without burning out. Emotional intelligence in healthcare settings is an important component of the competencies of the health professionals and quality of the service provided in the health institution. It is all the more important in the health industry because the health professionals are dealing with people who are under extreme emotional stress and may or may not be able to express these emotions.

Emotional intelligence exists in the healthcare environment on many different levels. For examples

- Interactions between healthcare staff and patients.
- Delivering difficult news to patients and families.
- Managing stress.
- Working together as a team.
- Avoiding mistakes and burnouts.

### **Elements of Emotional Intelligence in Health Care Professionals:**

The healthcare workers are having long working hours and has too much workloads. In extra, they need to deal with patient complaints and the constant interference from their family members. The organizational issues also add up to these issues along with their personal issues that they deal with. These all can lead to burnout and increase in stress levels of the professional carers it resulting in patient dissatisfaction, clinical errors or even insufficient patient care. A systematic and successful healthcare professional needs to possess a high level of emotional intelligence to understand the problems of the patient and accordingly act to provide comfort for the recovery. There are six important elements why emotional intelligence is an important quality to have for healthcare workers:

1. *Intrapersonal*: The ability to permanently monitor (our) feelings constitutes the fundamental emotional skill that supports the building of all the other skills because not being able to recognize our true feelings makes us vulnerable and to assess the emotions of self gives complete stability and confidence. This element highlights self-actualization, awareness of one's own emotions, independence of thought, self-regard and assertiveness. This being able to take better decisions in adverse situations.
2. *Interpersonal*: Empathy is the beginning for the talent to understand others, empathetic persons paying more attention to the feelings of others and being more capable of understanding and supporting them in any situation. Understanding of others feeling and being sensitive to others needs to develop good rapport among the team members as well as patients. This type of element can enhance clinical excellence and patient care.
3. *Adaptability*: The capacity to ruler our emotions, calm themselves down, eliminate depression, irritability or other negative emotions represents one of the basic emotional qualities that are the object of emotional intelligence. Being flexible to changes, brings about better solutions and problems can be seen as opportunities.
4. *Stress Management*: Less impulsive, high resilience and coping of stress. Ability to perform with positive outcomes in stressful environment and taking effective decision without being impulsive gives better results.
5. *General mood*: Optimistic attitude and being happy and positive. Being positive behaviour is contagious. Happy and humour behaviour keeps the work environment positive and results in quality work environment.
6. *Oneself-Motivation*: Self Emotional control, helping to motivating the health workers to using emotions constructively bring about special performances in all situations, acting like an incentive in everyday life to improve the quality in profession.

### **Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Health Professional Barriers:**

Healthcare professionals have touched on various barriers and issues within healthcare settings that can strain the relationship between healthcare worker and patient and can decrease the level of care that a patient receives, while increasing the likelihood of neglect or abuse. Working in a high-stress, and often over-crowded and under-staffed environment without sufficient support makes it increasingly difficult for healthcare workers to maintain empathy between healthcare workers and their patients, as time constraints burn-out and decreasing energy can cause a decrease in a healthcare worker's empathy. The stress of working with difficult patients may also influence a health worker's empathy.

Professional exhaustion (the burnout syndrome) is common barrier in healthcare workers. The Symptoms burnout can include anger, stress, pride, distrust and a reduced sense of achievement, all of which makes quality patient care more difficult. It happens for a range of reasons, including over-pressure in workplaces, low support, bad work-life balance or feeling inadequate control over, overwhelmed or in conflict with the work itself. Either empathy or exhaustion increases, the other one decreases – that is, they are negatively associated to each other.

Professional exhaustion can be explained as a major significance of prolonged persecution to stress at work, which develops when demands from the professional area and the personal capacities are unbalanced for a long time. It can also coexist with other illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, stress.

The Professional exhaustion has the following three dimensions:

*Emotional exhaustion* – It highlights stress by negative or challenging events in life, lacking energy, attitude of the inadequacy between one's own emotions and the circumstances and the fact that significant wealth has been consumed at work. It is the basic dimension, exhibit by a decreased emotional attitude, emotional concern or oversaturation.

*Depersonalization* – It refers to the feeling disconnected or detached from one's self. This will make disruption of interpersonal relationships as the affected person becomes either depending on others, or negativistic, emotionless, pessimistic.

*Personal accomplishment* – The low level of personal accomplishment shows burnout symptoms associated with high self-efficacy, the tendency of negative self-assessment of one's capabilities, feelings of competence, achievements, professional success, limiting one's opportunities and obligations to others. Consequently, that type of person is perceived as inefficient and unskilled to achieve goals.

Professional exhaustion will not show prompt symptoms, but appears as a slow response to emotional exhaustion and continuous exposure to stressors, which in turn lead to an increase in the degree of brutalize and professional dissatisfaction. Emotions are closely associate to a person's professional outcomes, impulse, plans and needs. Explained in terms of realization, understanding and emotional expression, emotional intelligence is considered along with cognitive intelligence and it's helps a person adapt more easily to situations and challenges that may appear in personal and professional life.

Healthcare professionals with high emotional intelligence experience low levels of Professional exhaustion. That is, the emotional intelligence in health professionals and burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) are associate with each other. Professional exhaustion can be seen as the negative bar of employee wellbeing and the opposite would be work engagement. Another point of view, the positive bar would be emotional intelligence in healthcare professionals, which is a successful adaptation to an unfavourable environment, while Professional exhaustion could occur as a result of the failure to adjust and adapt to the same environment.

### **Emotional intelligence and patient outcomes:**

The healthcare profession is a helping profession or vocation that gives direct service to dependent individuals through interpersonal relationships. The relationship between the carer and the patient plays a very important role and the professionals emotional intelligence helps them to identify the patient's emotions, needs and requirements and it helps create an environment in which more effective and quality care can be provided. This greatly suggests that emotional intelligence has a potential influence on the quality of care a patient receives in healthcare areas. Emotional intelligence is one explanation for why some health care organisations are better at delivering patient-centred care. Emotional intelligence has been shown to positively contribute in patient outcomes in healthcare settings are:

- Healthcare staffs and patient relationship
- Increased Empathy
- Increased teamwork

- Increased communication
- Stress management
- Organizational commitment
- Staffs career satisfaction
- Effective leadership.

The health care professionals become more collaborative in nature, it is important that front line providers and health care leaders understand how important emotional intelligence is in achieving greater patient outcomes and satisfaction. Emotional intelligence is essential in providing quality patient care and a focus on Emotional intelligence training can help with achieving better patient care.

#### **Need of Emotional Intelligence Training for Healthcare Professionals:**

In the healthcare organizations it is becoming very necessary to incorporate emotional intelligence as a value in healthcare setting. If the health care providers lack of emotional intelligence skills and they need to be trained to develop them. The providers need to be taught this skill during their training period itself. This type of starting will help in developing a quality caring environment for the patients. Training will guide to better work and life balance and helps the staffs to build resilience and cope up with the difficulties that arise in the profession. The professionals being more empathetic and sensitive to the needs of the co-workers as well as the patients and also their families can result in greater patient outcomes and quality in care. Teaching to develop Emotional intelligence as a skill will enhance self-awareness and performance improvement, healthy personal and professional growth, ability of co-operation with co-workers, effective communication, team building skill development, and conflict resolution.

#### ***The specific Emotional Intelligence skills are***

1. **Self-Actualization:** It is a skill improving the capacity to lead a wealth and meaningful life by continuously striving to improve oneself towards the maximum development of one's abilities and talents.
2. **Stress Tolerance:** This skill will help a person with ability to holdout against adverse events or situations without falling apart or becoming overwhelmed.
3. **Optimism:** This is a skill make an ability to maintain and support a positive attitude despite challenges and complications.
4. **Happiness:** The ability to feel satisfied with one's life, to enjoy oneself and others, and to have fun.
5. **Assertiveness:** The skill will improve the ability to openly communicate feelings, beliefs, and thoughts and defend personal rights and values in a socially acceptable, non-destructive, non-offensive manner, and to maintain the talent to do so even if the stance taken is not admired or accepted by others as the norm, the ability to constructively self-advocate.

Training programme for development of Emotional intelligence that includes four phases.

1. Preparation
2. Training
3. Transfer and Maintenance
4. Evaluation

Step 1: The preparation phase involves evaluation of the needs of an Emotional intelligence program and start involving the staff to join in and understand the importance of attending the program.

Step 2: The training includes various learning techniques that are used to transfer the knowledge about emotional intelligence and develop Emotional intelligence among the health professionals.

Step 3: The Transfer phase refers to the transfer of the skills learnt in the program into practice in their daily professional life.

Step 4: Evaluation phase involves giving feedback about the program and evaluating the effects of the program in application of Emotional intelligence by the professionals so that improvements can be made for further efforts of Emotional intelligence training.

There have been many other similar programs designed for professionals to develop and improve their Emotional intelligence levels for better performance such as individual counselling, role plays, simulations, games, online support groups and many more and insists that the choice of method of training would depend on the type of organisation and type of training needed. An effective technique to increase self-awareness among professionals is writing of learning journals that help the person to reflect on his thinking, observation and learning. Training for self-management, which is the next step of development of Emotional intelligence after self-awareness, could include methods such as relaxation techniques of yoga, meditation, walk, aerobic exercise, and long baths. For development of empathy and social awareness would require active listening. For management of relationships, helping others, communication and active involvement in professional organisations may be helpful.

## II. Conclusion:

The influence of Emotional intelligence in healthcare settings therefore seems apparent; if healthcare professionals higher in Emotional intelligence are more tolerant, empathic, resilient, understandable, caring, and able to feel emotions of others, they are more likely to be able to take care of themselves, and in turn their patients. Emotional intelligence is the capacity of the mind to understand, analyse and manage emotions of oneself and the others. It shows that health care workers want to respond emotionally to their patients to improve the level of satisfaction. The patient now regard care not only in the form of the clinical or physical expertise he/she has received but also on how it was delivered by professionals. Quality of care can be significant by the relationship between patient and healthcare provider. It is evident that lack of emotional intelligence results negative impression on performance of the staff, quality care and patient outcomes and also the lack of communication between the team of healthcare providers.

Thus, the review will collate that have prospect the impact of Emotional intelligence on caring behaviour in health care professionals, to provide evidence on the utility of the current emphasis on Emotional intelligence in health services. Caring behaviour here can relate to physical or emotional aspects of care. The healthcare professional needs to be empathetic of the patients and develop relationships that would encourage communication and confidence in the patient. It is often assumed that healthcare professionals have high emotional intelligence levels because of their choice of a profession involving a lot of interaction with people and the experience of dealing with patients on a daily basis. Various occasions on day-by-day basis may arise where the staff may have to deal with the emotions of self as well as the others. Thus, Emotional intelligence becomes a necessary skill as well as a tool to cope up with stressful and challenging situations and maintain positive emotions.

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