Implementing a Post-Code Moment of Silence

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Background

- A post-code moment of silence is a designated set of time (a few seconds to a minute) of silence at the end of a code-event when a patient dies, to reflect.
- A mindful moment of silence, without action or medicine, to honor the life that has ended in front of us after a code-event.
- Time to reflect on the gravity and weight of the role that health care providers play in caring for patients and their families.
- Provide a way to build capacity and resiliency in one of the most difficult clinical situations.

Objectives

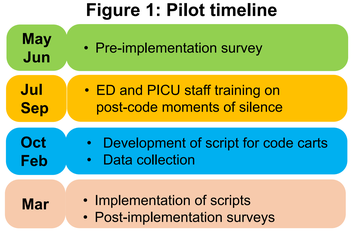
- To increase the frequency in which this moment of silence occurs at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children (KMCWC) .
- To understand attitudes and barriers to having this moment of silence.
- To identify and implement ways to lower the barriers for staff to be able to process and move forward after difficult outcomes.

Methods

- Participants completed online surveys containing questions on prior participation, assessed willingness to participate/lead, and asked open ended questions on overall attitudes and thoughts on participation
- Following the pre-implementation surveys, educational sessions were held for Emergency Department (ED) and Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) staff about post-code moments of silence

- Educational sessions included:
  - Research behind post-code moment of silence
  - Proposed benefits of implementation
  - Sample script

Figure 1: Pilot timeline



- The framework was piloted between May 2023 - Sept 2023 (Figure 1).
- Staff from the ED, PICU, and General Pediatric Floors were the primary participants in the pilot phase of the project (Table 1).
- Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

Results

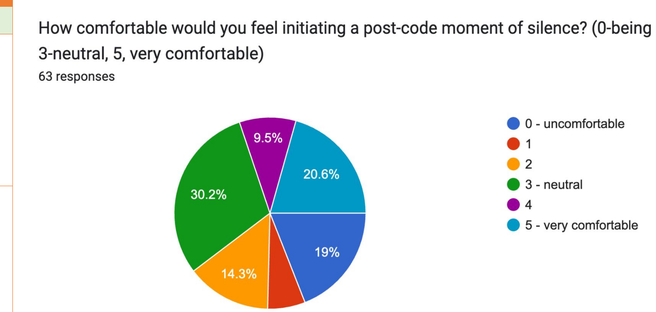
Table 1: Participant Characteristics

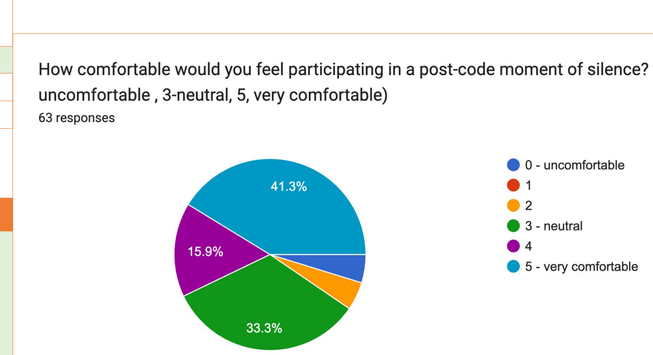
CHARACTERISTICS	N (%)
PARTICIPANTS, N=63	
Professional role:	
Attending Physician	12 (19)
Resident Physician	14 (22)
Nurse	24 (38)
Respiratory Therapist	8 (13)
Clinical Assistants	2 (3)
House Supervisor	3 (5)
Department:	
Emergency Department	26 (41)
Pediatric Intensive Care Unit	5 (8)
General Pediatric Floors	8 (13)
Transport	2 (3)
Patient Services	2 (3)
House Supervisor	2 (2)
Multiple of above	18 (29)
Prior Post-code Moment of Silence Experience	
At KMCWC	15 (24)
During medical career	20 (32)

Table 2. Examples of Responses

Attending Physicians	• Very helpful for family and medical team • Extremely beneficial to recognize the patient as a person and human aspect of what we are doing • It helps from a coping/closure standpoint. To be honest, I've probably been doing this silently for myself for years • Can be tough depending on what else is going on in the unit and how the family is coping
Nursing/Respiratory Therapists	• I believe it should be done at every post code that doesn't make it. A moment of peace and quiet to reflect and think about this person's and our fragile life humbles us • I think it would help if the [physician] initiates it • Respectful to the deceased and a nice moment of reflection for myself as medical staff • This would help the team take a breather to show respect to the family and to ensure the staff has a moment to recuperate • The time I was involved in a moment of silence post-code, it was directed by the Team Leader
Resident Physicians	• Helps to check in with yourself and also take a moment before returning to "usual" duties rather than glossing over what had happened • I would rather spend a moment of silence alone rather than organized group moment
House Supervisors	• The involvement of the code leader is crucial • Sometimes we all just want to leave the code and it can take one person to say let's have a moment of silence

Figure 1: Willingness to participate and lead





Conclusions

- Implementing and educating staff about post-code moment of silence is possible. Staff responses are overall positive.
- Champions are a must for implementation, guidelines, and pediatric specific scripts would likely aid in occurrence and frequency.
- Further exploration of utility and benefit is on-going.

References

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