

January 2007

C4I Culture Assessment and Transition

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Recommended Citation

"C4I Culture Assessment and Transition" (2007). *Articles - Patient Care*. 14.
http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/pcare_articles/14



C4I Culture Assessment and Transition Results of “Focus Groups” on UCHC Culture

Assessing Culture at UCHC: A Survey

If you were working at UCHC in the spring of 2005, you may remember a survey that was mailed to your home asking for your thoughts and feelings about the “culture” at UCHC. The survey included questions about our culture: Job satisfaction, employee working conditions, diversity, and the quality/safety of the care we deliver to our patients. The survey was funded by the Connecticut Health Foundation and sponsored by the Office of Diversity Programs and C4I. Although the survey was anonymous, many employees voiced the concern that they were uncomfortable responding. Even so, we still received a 38% response rate. We would like to thank everyone who responded. Although it’s been a while since we’ve discussed the survey with employees, the C4I Culture Subgroup has been steadily working to enhance and improve the “culture” at UCHC based upon the feedback we received.



Town Meeting and Focus Groups

Last winter, Dr. Peter Deckers announced the results of the survey at a “Town Meeting.” As in any organization, our survey showed that there were areas we could improve upon. Five topics seemed to come up over and over again in the survey results, so the C4I Culture Assessment subgroup organized “Focus Groups”

which were held last spring to give employees a chance to give more detailed feedback.

The five topics were:

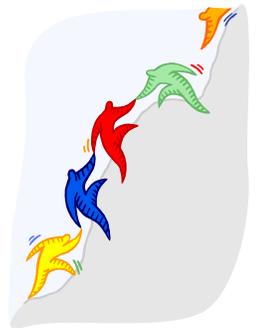
1. Teamwork
2. Fairness and Justice
3. Rewards and Recognition
4. Control
5. Feedback

Compiling and Sharing the Feedback

During the summer, the C4I Culture subgroup analyzed the results of all the feedback from the Focus Groups. They read transcripts from every session and thoughtfully compiled five summaries.

This past fall, the group shared these summaries with the Senior Leadership Team on Diversity. The group has also compiled a list of suggestions that they will present to senior leadership on how we can begin to address some of the areas that need work.

The following summaries contain the heartfelt and honest thoughts and feelings of employees who participated in the C4I Focus Groups. This feedback must be taken seriously and constructively. If we are really going to make a difference, we have to take a hard look at ourselves. Ready?



Announcing C4I’s New Website!

Visit us at:

<http://patientsafety.uchc.edu>

“C4I” is dedicated to making John Dempsey Hospital the safest hospital in Connecticut. We’d like your feedback and comments! Call us at Ext. 7650 or e-mail us at C4I@uchc.edu. Patient Safety Alerts can be e-mailed to: PSA@uchc.edu
James O. Menzoian, MD and Rhea Sanford, RN, PhD, CS—Co-Directors
Kevin Larsen, QA Specialist—Susan Garthwait, Executive Assistant

“Teamwork” Summary

All of the issues assessed in the focus groups have an effect on teamwork at UCHC. The Teamwork focus groups found that some employees perceive that their managers and supervisors are overworked, do not delegate well, or are poorly prepared for leadership roles. Poor communication hinders teamwork, as does a lack of staff involvement and perceived inequality within team structures. Feedback on accomplishments is sometimes perceived as inconsistent or unfair. High work demands can interfere with the processes of good teamwork. Individual agendas sometimes interfere with teams focusing on their overarching goals and valuing the abilities of all participants. Some employees are reluctant to bring up issues and freely discuss needs for fear of retribution. ***Endorsing transparent communication from all levels is a first step toward improving teamwork at UCHC.***

“Fairness and Justice” Summary

The Fairness and Justice focus groups found workplace equity to be most important element: Employees must be treated equally with no favoritism or special privileges based on job title, degree or classification. Hierarchies inhibit equity. Communication, including regular timely evaluation and feedback, must be free-flowing, honest, candid and personal. ***Mutual respect must be cultivated: from employee to supervisor and, just as importantly, from manager to employee.***

“Rewards and Recognition” Summary

Based on a review of the individual comments from the focus groups, the problem can be defined as: A culture where a job well done or a job performed above and beyond is often not acknowledged. Simple verbal acknowledgements are not always communicated, the current system of rewards (UCONN Pride and performance evaluations) are not felt by all to be sufficient. Some employees feel that proven systems and processes are not in place (merit and career development). ***We must endorse fair and equitable treatment for all employees and continually assess and reiterate the parameters of our recognition programs.***

“Control” Summary

Focus group participants felt that having real control over the job would have multiple benefits: Increased job satisfaction, retention, and better care quality. Participants realize that it is not possible or desirable to have total control over processes that require input and knowledge from multiple levels, but increased empowerment is desirable. Lack of job control seems to stem from senior management not fully understanding details of staffs’ jobs, as well as poor communication

and hidden agendas in decision making. Workload, mutual management/staff mistrust, and conflicts among staff also reduce employee job control. ***Respect for ideas of all staff is a crucial first step toward empowerment of employees.***

“Feedback” Summary

The feedback focus group revealed issues relating to lack of feedback, not enough senior management visibility, not enough of training for managers, not feeling valued as a member of their teams, too much use of email vs. face-to-face interactions, and whether or not employees can engage in feedback with supervisors without fear of reprisal. ***Promote timely, ongoing feedback, both positive and negative.***

Conclusion and Next Steps

There is much work to be done, but we have an ongoing dialog with senior management regarding these topics and are working to implement employees’ ideas and suggestions for ways we can enhance the culture at UCHC. We are invested in and committed to making the culture at UCHC the best in the state. We would like to thank the members of the C4I Culture Assessment and Transition subgroup for their steadfast dedication this important work.

Nicholas Warren, ScD, MAT
Marie Whalen, MBA

Co-Chairs, C4I Culture Assessment & Transition Subgroup

C4I Announcements

New Website! <http://patientsafety.uchc.edu>

Good Catch Winners for November, 2006

- **Rhiannon Armstrong, RN, Surgery 7**
- **Kristen Boucher, PA, NICU**
- **Cheryl Coppola, RN, Oncology 6**
- **Dawn Jacques, Surg. OR**
- **Mary Karabeinikoff, Health Info. Mgmt.**
- **Laura Perun, RN, PACU**
- **Gary Neilan, Pharmacy**
- **Pamela Scalzo, RN, ICU**
- **Jayne Schumacher, RN, Cardiology**
- **Elissa Simon, Health Info. Mgmt.**
- **Eileen Zimmerman, Health Info. Mgmt.**

UHC Patient Safety Net® Update

All managers and assistant managers have been trained in “PSN.” Frontline users are have been assigned a PSN overview/training session via the HealthStream system. We expect PSN to be fully operational by January 5, 2007.