Conclusion

A continuous survey process can be incorporated into Lean Healthcare processes at hospital wards to improve workplace health promotion activities among the employees. A survey process should be a “living tool” - a joint, meaningful and sustainable activity, and it increases the employee involvement in and responsibility for their workplace, as the process is driven together with the manager.

Background

The concept of Lean Healthcare is now widespread in healthcare service in Sweden. Lean Healthcare focuses on continuous improvement of hospital processes and how the processes can be most effective for the customer. However, the employees’ work health experience seems to be subordinated even though the employees are driving the process. There is a lack of research investigating how surveys can be used in a salutogenic process on a continuous basis, and how survey processes can be more meaningful, efficient, useful, and sustainable in organisations.

Aim

This study explored how hospital managers think and act regarding local workplace health promotion survey processes.

Method

- Interview study with Swedish hospital managers (n=6) performed in 2011. Managers were from different hospital wards, e.g. medicine, surgery, and maintenance.
- Interview guide: 1) experiences of performing local survey processes; 2) experiences of using two newly developed questionnaires, the Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale (SHIS) and the Work Experience Measurement Scale (WEMS).
- A phenomenographic approach was used for analysing the managers’ multi-faceted picture of the phenomenon of workplace survey processes, from “what” (workplace survey process as an object) to “how” (opinion formation during a survey process).
Results
The iterative analysis resulted in various manager experiences of survey processes, e.g. different involvement, often a manager activity, results fizzling out, and diverse employee commitment. Thus, two suggestions were made:

- Performing survey processes as a continuous health-promoting Lean Healthcare activity
- Steps in the survey process:
  1. the starting-point is a measurement with SHIS and WEMS,
  2. manager and employees discuss the survey results,
  3. the local ward decides on an area that is most important to them for further elaboration,
  4. the local ward measures only the chosen area of the questionnaire again and makes an assessment,
  5. from the new result, they continue to work with the same area or choose another area to focus on for improvements.

Quick facts about the salutogenic measurements of SHIS and WEMS:

Salutogenic perspective
A focus on resources, factors and processes that retain or increase health in the target group. The opposite to the pathogenic perspective that focuses on risks that weaken or eliminate health.

Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale (SHIS)
A self-reported measurement with twelve salutogenic indicators of a person’s health. The SHIS survey instrument is a six-graded response scale with a semantic differential, i.e. consisting of positive and negative words with opposite meanings. Example of opposite statements: felt alert – felt tired/exhausted.


Work Experience Measurement Scale (WEMS)
A self-reported measurement with 32 item statements in six areas: internal work experience, supportive work conditions, autonomy, time experience, leadership, and process of change. Example of statement: I feel that my work is meaningful. WEMS has a six-graded response scale from Totally agree to Totally disagree.


More information about the instruments: www.hkr.se/shis-wems