



“Please Don’t Hurt Me” – Physically or Emotionally

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The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children’s Hospital at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital

Our Organization

The Bristol-Myers Squibb Children’s Hospital (BMSCH) at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is the focal point of New Brunswick’s growing children’s health campus, which includes the Rutgers Child Health Institute and PSE&G Children’s Specialized Hospital.

The 105-bed, state-designated, acute care children’s hospital is a state-of-the-art facility that is specially designed for children and embodies family-centered care. From pediatric surgery, urology, and cardiology to oncology, hematology, pulmonology, and pediatric/emergency care, BMSCH’s specialists and intensivists provide advanced care for children of all ages – from fragile newborns to adolescents. BMSCH is also home to New Jersey’s first designated pediatric trauma center and an internationally recognized adolescent bariatric surgery center of excellence.



Background

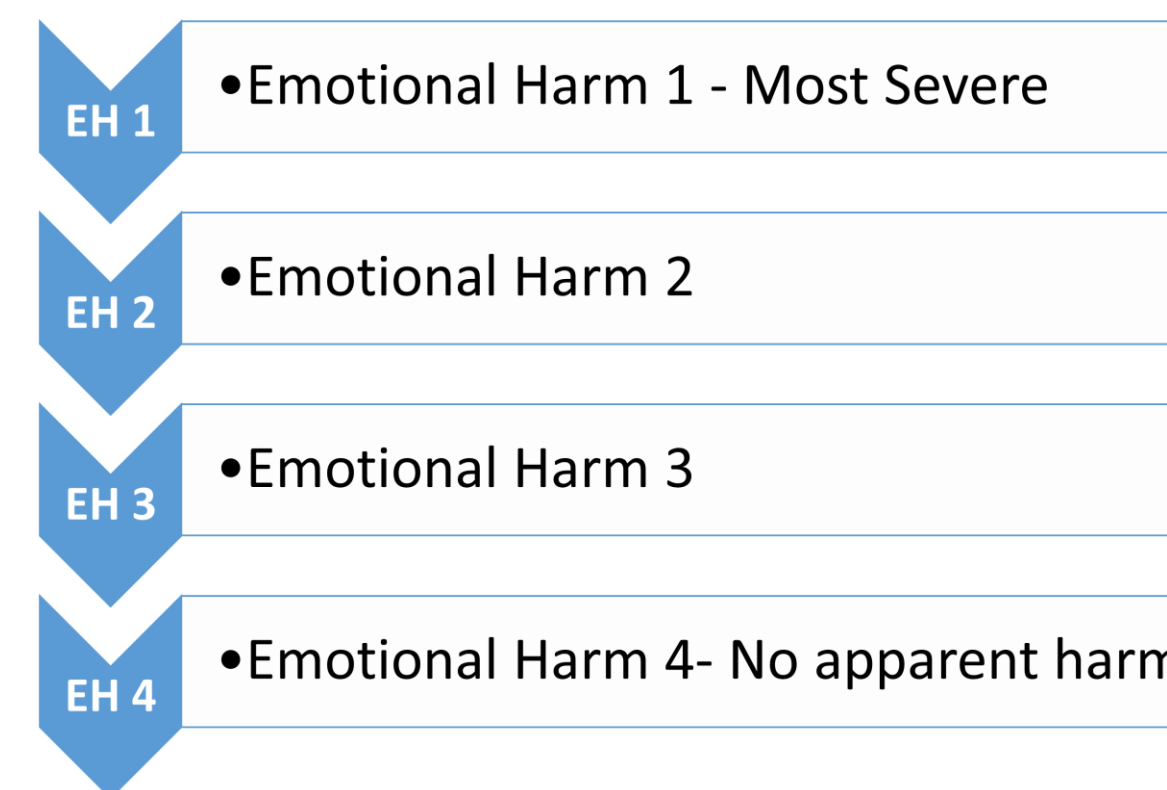
All hospitals are on a path to becoming a high reliability organization (HRO); combining the most efficient people, processes, polices, structures, technologies and environment to achieve top-tier outcomes and to deliver the highest quality care and safest experience for patients, communities and workforce. While most hospitals have physical safety standards of care in place, many do not include emotional safety standards.

Emotional safety is the intentional, interdisciplinary practice to promote resiliency, healing, and trust for pediatric patients and their families during medical experiences (www.emotional-safety.org).

Initiatives

- Literature review of emotional safety and severity scales
- House-wide education on emotional safety
- Sharing of emotional safety stories
- Designating emotional safety champions
- Creation of BMSCH Emotional Harm Severity Scale
- Inclusion of scale in safety event classification process

BMSCH Emotional Harm Severity Scale



Safety Event Classification Examples

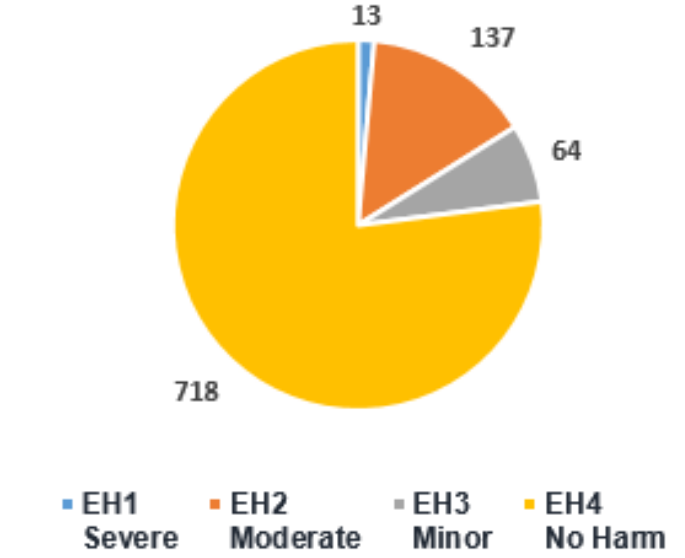
Location of event	Verge event type	Event	Safety event classification levels of harm	Emotional harm classification
Peds ED	Medication or other substance	Albuterol ordered in ED, never given. Patient transferred to PICU, started and ordered by PICU fellow	PSE 2 Minimal temporary harm	EH 2- potential medication error, stems from minor communication breakdown. Loss of trust.
Medical Same Day	Documentation	Patient sent from clinic to MSD for chemo without orders. Chemo delayed.	PSE 4 No patient harm	EH 3 Delay in treatment, loss of trust/respect
Adolescent Unit	Assessment/management/treatment	Patient told over the phone, by a physician, a terminal prognosis without any support present	PSE 4 No patient harm	EH 1 Severe emotional harm. Long term psychological trauma.
Oncology Unit	Laboratory/chemistry	CBC took over 2 hours, multiple calls to lab	Not a safety event	EH 3 - Minor delays apology, emotional support, active listening

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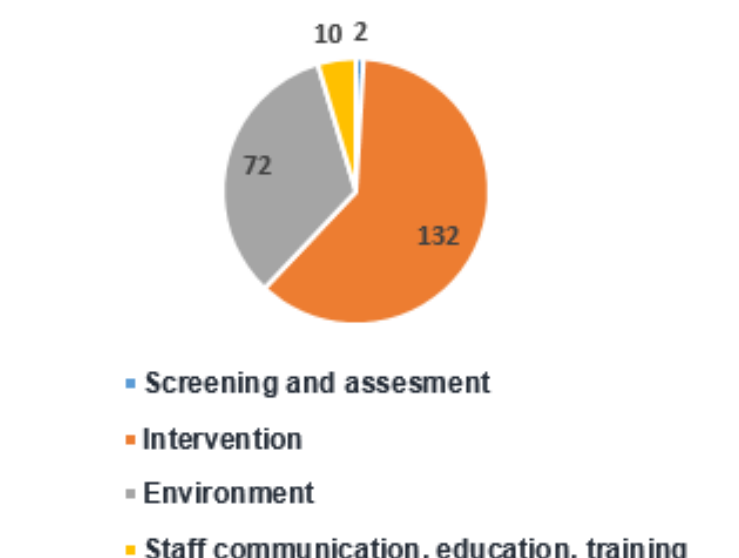
Results

Safety events were classified using an emotional harm severity scale of 1 - 4. Each event was then categorized based on the four pillars of the ACLP Emotional Safety Framework: (a) screening and assessment; (b) intervention; (c) environment; and (d) education, training and communication. Data was aggregated and analyzed for the year of 2022.

2022 Emotional Harm Level



Emotional Safety Framework



Initial project challenges included team member’s knowledge deficit on emotional safety and the inability to document emotional harm. The inclusion of emotional safety discussions heightened the awareness and responsiveness of all team members in providing emotionally safe care.

Conclusion/Implications for Practice

The Joint Commission suggests that healthcare organizations commit to “zero harm” as a goal towards becoming a high reliability organization. Patient safety must include both physical and emotional safety measures. By partnering with the hospital’s quality department, this hospital is able to discuss, track and improve upon emotional safety events. Partnering Child Life, Family Centered Care and Quality allowed emotional safety to evolve as a core value within BMSCH.

Next Steps

Operationalize emotional safety initiatives to reduce emotional harm in the area of staff intervention.

- Develop staff education material on emotional safety and the emotional harm rating scale utilized at BMSCH.
- Implement program for multidisciplinary team through online learning, and attending resident/nursing in-services and unit PI meetings.
- Analyze effectiveness of program. (10% decrease in total annual EH1 events)
- Partner with leadership team to identify timely interventions to minimize emotional harm and or provide service recovery after an event.
- Disseminate project methods and findings: at a system-wide level, nationally at conferences, to children’s hospital quality improvement and patient safety collaborative programs and through publications.