Code Lavender is a crisis intervention strategy designed to provide support to health care workers during times of high stress or loss while on the job.

The Essentials

- When a stressful event occurs, physicians and staff may call upon a Code Lavender team, typically comprised of clinical leaders, a coordinator, a chaplain, or other support services, for resources and emotional support.

- At Presbyterian, Code Lavender is an individualized support program coordinated by clinical leaders and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Success and Impact

The Code Lavender support strategy is available at Presbyterian Hospital (downtown), Rust, and Kaseman. It will be available at hospitals in the regional delivery system by the end of 2018.

What We Know About Code Lavender

“Code Lavender” was coined in 2004 by Dr. Earl Bakken, a physician and Board Chairman at the North Hawaii Community Hospital in Waimea. This 35-bed hospital focuses on holistic care in which individuals are treated for mind, body, and spirit. While the Code Lavender program was initially created for the use of patient and families, it subsequently became a tool to resuscitate the emotional, spiritual, and physical well being of clinicians as well.

In 2008, Code Lavender was launched at the Cleveland Clinic by Dr. Bridget Duffy. Led by the Healing Services Team, the support program for clinicians reported that 98% of employees who utilized the services said that it met or exceeded their expectations, and 96% reported that they would recommend it to their peers. The Code Lavender team has grown at Cleveland Clinic to include four holistic nurses and ten chaplains. Dr. Duffy, the first healthcare Chief Experience Officer (CXO) in the nation, now leads the Experience Innovation Network, a network of industry pioneers who advance the development of more humanistic care models.

Code Lavender is now being utilized by several organizations across the country including Keck Medical Center of USC, Johnson City Medical Center, Tampa General Hospital, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center.

“It’s apparent when employees feel supported by the institution they work for, they experience less burnout, higher satisfaction, fewer call-offs, and better interactions with patients. Patients receive better care and a better overall experience if their caregivers have more to give. Caring plus caring seems to add up to more caring, not less. What Code Lavender and other holistic support services are showing us is that the whole patient/family/employee ‘ecosystem’ is interdependent, and when one part of the whole is nourished and supported, all benefit.”

—Rev. Amy Greene, Director of Spiritual Care, Cleveland Clinic

For more information about Code Lavender:

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Any situation in which a health care worker experiences extraordinary stress or loss (for example, a maternal or pediatric death, victims of violent crimes, acts of violence in the workplace, etc.) may warrant a Code Lavender response, to help the employee who is in need of emotional, spiritual, or physical support.

Debriefing
Despite the frequency with which adverse events occur in healthcare, organizational mechanisms for supporting staff in these situations are not routinely embedded. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) one of many crisis intervention techniques that are included under the umbrella of a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program. CISD has long been provided for professionals, such as disaster workers, who are exposed to traumatic and high-stress events. A form of psychological first-aid in the aftermath of the event, the debriefing aims to reduce feelings of distress and to restore group cohesion and performance. The debriefing is completely confidential, and no written records are kept. It is designed to be a protected forum and a safe space for sharing.

Debriefing is considered an effective strategy to promote resilience and recovery. It is just one of the strategies that may be offered in a Code Lavender response.

How Code Lavender Works at PHS
Presbyterian acknowledges that only a strong, supported workforce can deliver the kind of experience that leads to outcomes, loyalty, and differentiation. The organization is investing in the Code Lavender program to connect with and support fellow staff members, prevent fatigue and burnout, and build resiliency.

Any member of the care team may call a Code Lavender 24/7 by phoning EAP (866-254-3555), or contacting the Operator to connect with EAP.

The EAP Clinical Representative collects information about the event or situation and determines an appropriate initial response. The response is coordinated by the EAP. A specialized team responds to provide the affected person(s) whatever individualized support they may need immediately after the event as well as in the days that follow. All staff in the affected unit are alerted through the use of lavender LED tea lights.

Full Response
The EAP mobilizes a cascade of responders:

1. The EAP Representative calls the hospital Operator (back line 724-7755); and sends a group text message to designated medical leadership.
2. Medical leadership responds; goes to affected unit to provide support.
3. Operator notifies:
   a. the administrator on-call (operators have call list), who responds with on-site support.
   b. the chaplain on-call (operators have call list), who responds with on-site support.
   c. nutrition services who bring nutritional support (comfort foods; water, juice, and/or tea) for staff in the Code Lavender area.
4. An EAP Representative goes to the affected unit and provides the appropriate level of support (debrief, etc.).
**Modified Response**

If the EAP Representative determines that a full Code Lavender response is not necessary, there may be fewer responders. At a minimum, the EAP Representative will contact the affected person(s) to offer support.

**Follow up**

The EAP follows up with all workers who were affected one week after the event, and periodically as needed.

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### SERVICES

Provide support to health care workers during times of high stress or loss on the job.

Provide follow-up support.

### PEOPLE

**Process Owner:** Jill Slominski, MD, Medical Director, Patient and Provider Experience

Physicians, Advance Practice Clinicians, and Nurses

EAP Representative

AOC

Chaplaincy

Nutrition Services

Phone Operators

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### Process and Responsibilities

- **Care Team Member:** initiates Code Lavender
- **Intake system** notifies the EAP Rep on call
- **Charge Nurse:** sets out lavender tea lights, alerting the Staff
- **EAP Rep** consults with initiating Care Team Member; collects more information
- **EAP Rep** offers individualized support and resources, as needed
- **EAP Rep** determines the appropriate response
- **EAP Rep** notifies Phone Operator and Physician Leaders
- **Physician Leaders** support Physicians/APCs and Care Team as needed
- **AOC** supports Care Team as needed
- **Chaplain** reaches out to person(s) in need
- **Nutrition Services** brings refreshments
- **One week later,** EAP Rep follows up with affected team
- **Periodic follow up,** as appropriate
Measures of Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Aligns with Aim</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offer compassion for the clinician who is in need of emotional, spiritual, or physical support.</td>
<td>• Number of Code Lavender responses per unit</td>
<td>Exceptional Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employee survey results</td>
<td>Better Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The measures of success are evaluated periodically by the Medical Director of Patient and Provider Experience and by the Chief Medical Officer and Senior Vice President.

Future Work

Expand the reach of the program to include all units of any care setting in all PHS facilities. Code Lavender serves as just one support strategy for improving the overall wellness and resiliency of our clinicians.

Glossary

**Code Lavender**
A crisis intervention strategy designed to provide emotional, spiritual, and/or physical support to healthcare workers during times of high stress or loss while on the job. At Presbyterian, Code Lavender responses are coordinated through the Employee Assistance Program.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**
To help employees cope with personal and work-related challenges and stress that may be affecting the employee’s wellbeing, including our ability to function at home and on the job, Presbyterian offers access to an Employee Assistance Program. EAP services are provided by The Solutions Group; free to employees and their immediate household members. To access, call (505) 254-3555 in Albuquerque, or (866) 254-3555 statewide, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

References and Resources

**Quick Guide**
- Code Lavender

**Additional Resources**
- Code Lavender: Transforming the Human Experience in Healthcare
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing From a Traumatic Event (Psychology Today)
- Critical Incident Stress Information Sheets (Solutions Group)
- Experience Innovation Network
- Reduce Burnout and Improve Resiliency