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NURSES' CRY: "COVID-19 IS INFECTING MY WELLBEING, PLEASE TALK TO ME!"

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Background

COVID-19 pandemic has affected wellbeing of frontline nurses (Munn et al., 2021). Each time our Chief Nursing Officer (CNO), interacted with nurses and asked, "How are you?" staff would just cry. This led our CNO to collaborate with the system's resources to provide needed real-time emotional and mental health support in the form of intentional rounding with a mental health practitioner (MHP).

Project Goals/Objectives

The goal of the project was to provide real-time, intentional and efficient mental health and/or emotional support to promote the well-being of each nurse and other frontline staff.

Methods of Implementation

- Following interdisciplinary collaboration, CNO advocated to have MHP available in units to provide real-time, intentional emotional/mental health support.
- Pre-survey conducted on perception of frontline nurses/staff on how they feel supported mentally and emotionally during pandemic.
- MHP Mental Health/Emotional Rounding commenced in patient care areas following introduction of MHP and communication of rounding, including schedule, frequency and the intention of rounding.

- Post surveys were conducted on perception of frontline nurses/staff on feeling supported mentally and emotionally a couple of weeks after the rounding started.



Outcomes

Emotional/Mental Health/Wellbeing Rounding
Aug-October 2021 (ICU & Med-Surg Units)
Question: Do you feel supported emotionally/mentally during the pandemic?

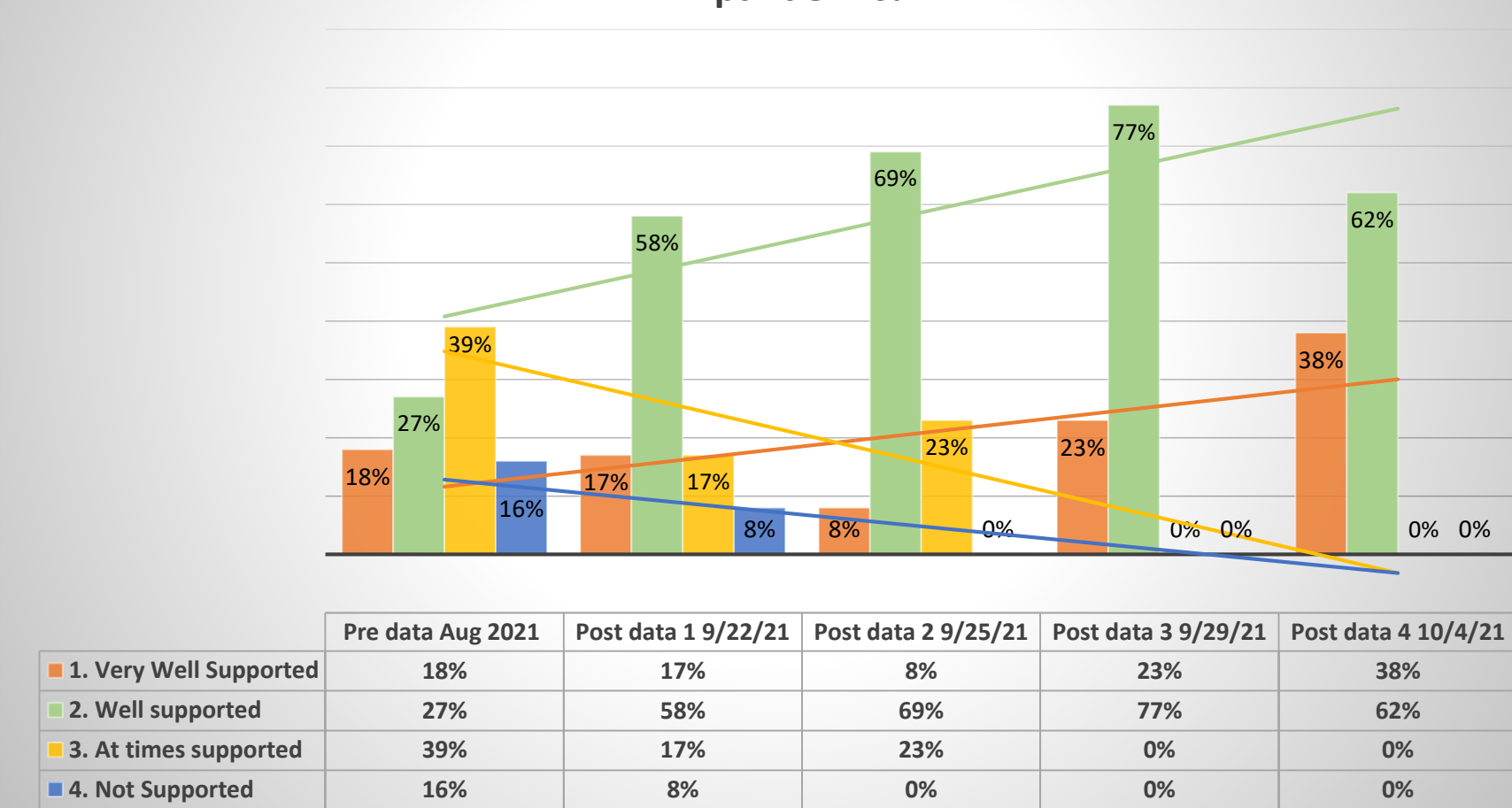


Chart above shows improvement in perception of frontline staff feeling supported during the pandemic after rounding was implemented:

- Very Well Supported** responses increased from 18% to 38%
- Well Supported** increased from 27% to 77% (highest)
- At Times Supported** decreased from 39% to 0%
- Not Supported** decreased from 16% to 0%.



Discussion

- Effect of COVID-19 on emotional and mental health of frontline nurses and the intensifying heaviness of this affecting their wellbeing cannot be underrated (Glasper, 2021).
- Providing staff emotional and mental health support is tantamount to maintaining wellbeing of the patient whom nurses and other staff face each day.
- Regularly scheduled intentional rounding by MHPs is an effective strategy to support emotional and mental health of frontline nurses and other staff.
- There is an opportunity to further enhance this much-needed service to include teaching coping skills during the course of the interactions.
- Incorporating a much robust emotional and mental health real-time program and resources in nursing practice should be a priority.

References

- Munn LT, Liu TL, Swick M, Rose R, Broyhill B, New L, Gibbs M. Original Research: Well-Being and Resilience Among Health Care Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-Sectional Study. Am J Nurs. 2021 Aug 1;121(8):24-34.
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