Culture of Safety Center
2022 Summit

Preparing New Staff
Recruitment, Onboarding, Integration, and Retention

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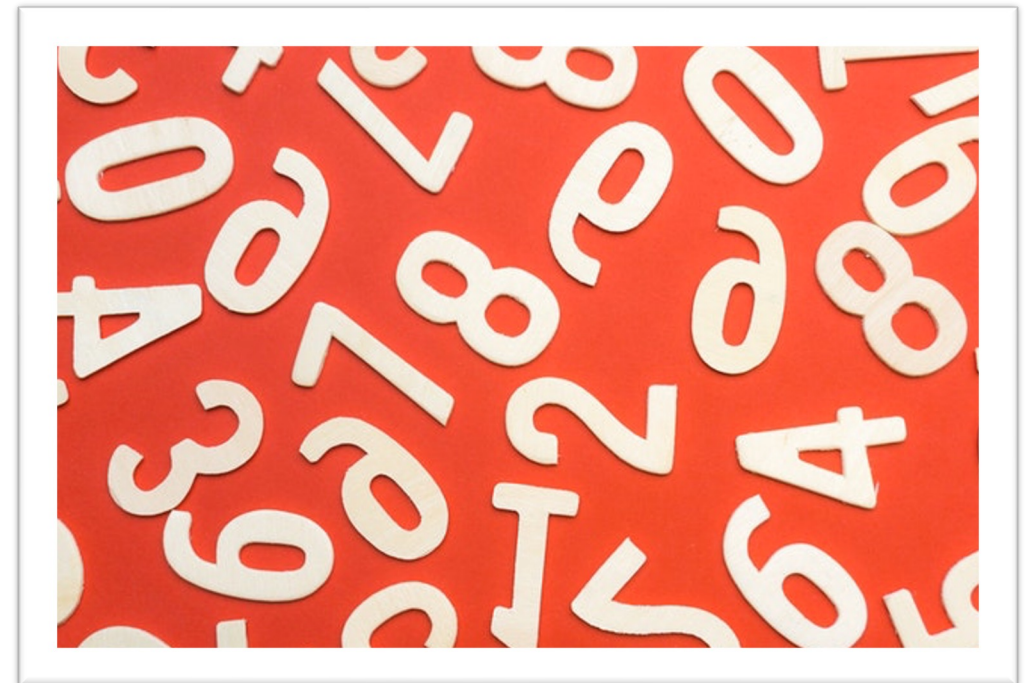Aug. 24, 2022

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Stats

Median annual rate of nursing staff turnover: 94% (Health Affairs, 2021)

One-star facilities: 135.3%

Five-star facilities: 76.7%
(Skilled Nursing News, 2021)

Per-worker turnover cost in the US:
33-40% of the worker's annual earnings

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Philosophy

To retain staff, we need them to:

- Fall in love with the residents
- Connect with teammates and feel part of the team
- Have the job fit into their lives
- Offer adequate pay and benefits
- Find the work morally congruent

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Identifying and minimizing job challenges

Practical challenges such as:

- Scheduling
- Transportation

Identify these challenges through:

- Staff surveys
- Exit interviews
- Suggestion box
- Awareness of patterns in staff callouts, complaints
- Ask team
- Sleep over

Recruitment

Identifying the appeal
- Of the field
- Of the facility
- Of the position

What's your slogan?

Who are your potential employees?
- High school students, retirees, immigrants
- Connections of current employees
- People re-entering the workforce or making a career change

How are you reaching them?

Hire for attitude, train for skills

Onboarding

Creating a new onboarding strategy
- Following up with leads
- Engaging before the start date
- First days
- Regular check-ins

Preparing new staff
- More comprehensive education
  - Soft skills (professional attitude, work ethic)
  - Teamwork
  - Understanding system
  - Knowledge of how to work with types of residents and families
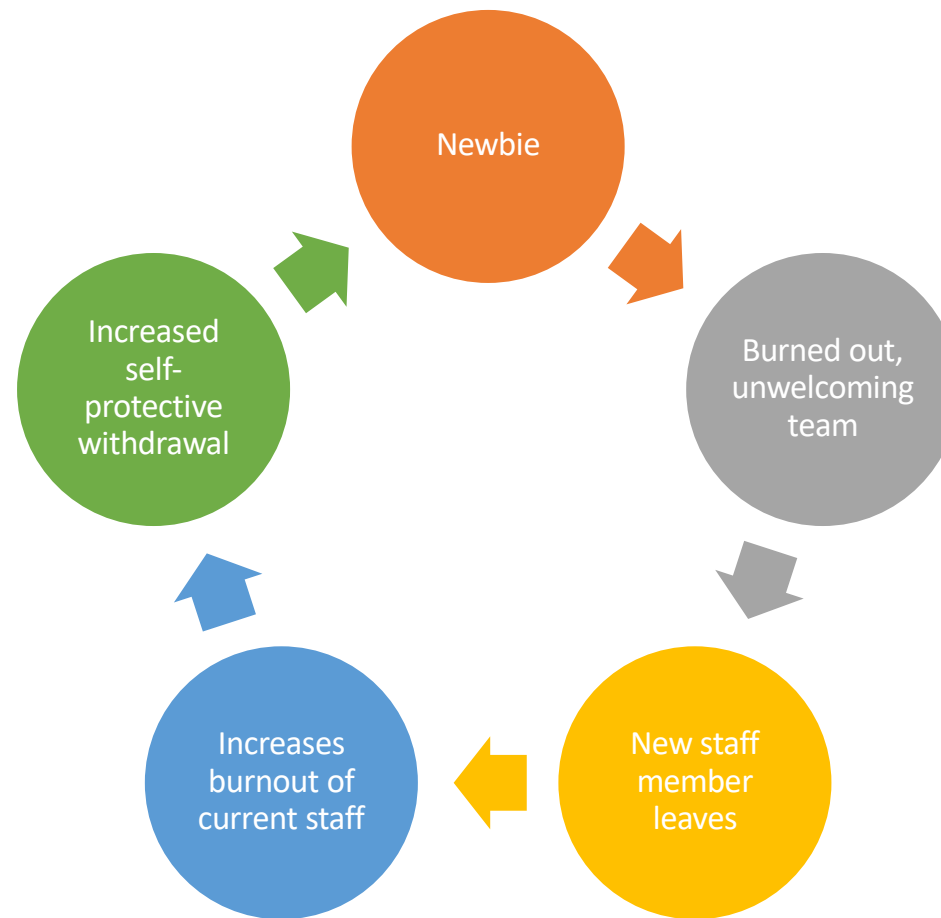- Coping with loss

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Coping with Loss

- Based on "The Hot and Cool of Death Awareness at Work," by Adam Grant and Kimberly Wade-Benzoni

- "Hot" reaction or "Death Anxiety" → self-protection and "stress-related withdrawal behaviors" such as absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover

- "Cool" reaction or "Death Reflection" → pro-social behaviors such as helping, mentoring, and thinking of work in the context of benefitting society

- Chronic exposure to "mortality cues" can shift workers from death anxiety to death reflection
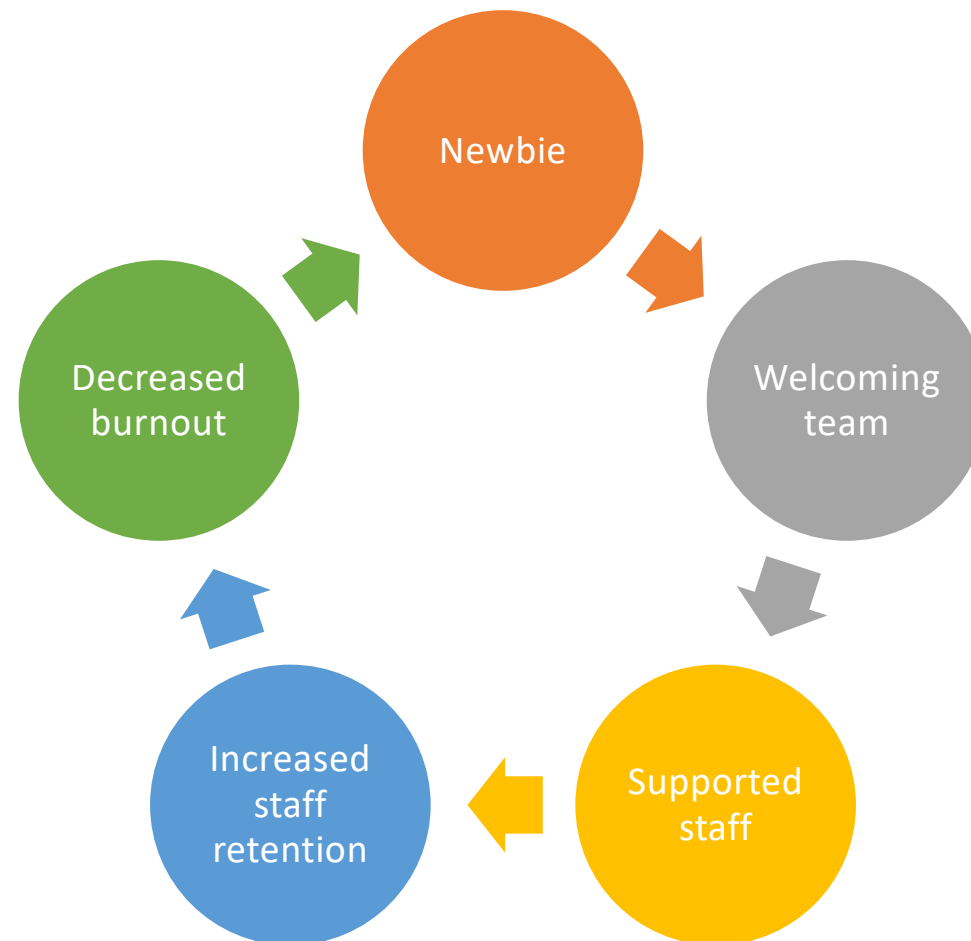
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Coping with Loss (cont.)

- Younger workers more likely to experience death anxiety and older workers more like to experience death reflection

- Job versus career or calling

- Strategies:
    - "Inoculate" by advance training
    - Mentors
    - Resources to cope with grief and loss
    - Bonus (i.e, after 6 months)

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Typical New Employee Integration Pattern

Ideal New Employee Integration Pattern

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Integration

- Preparing old staff members
  - Heads up
  - Introductions
- Staff "buddies"
- Peer mentoring program
  - Career ladder

- Supporting the team in their training of new people
- Systems to integrate new workers
  - Getting-to-know-you lunches, team meetings, change-of-shift reports
- Special "I'm new" name tag, hat, scarf, etc.
- Hire "Class of '22"

Staff Retention

- Job works with life
  - Flexible schedule with control over scheduling
  - Onsite or subsidized day care
  - Transportation
  - Education subsidies
  - Adequate pay and benefits
- Noticing and preventing burnout
- Moral congruence
- Staff training

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