



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

Schwartz Rounds

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What are Schwartz Centre Rounds

- Schwartz Rounds are a structured, facilitated and confidential safe space for you to discuss the emotional and social aspects of your experiences while working in your role. They provide a forum for you to be able to share your challenges that you experience and to understand the struggle that others face as well.
- Developed by the Kenneth B Schwartz Centre in the USA
- Run by the Point of Care Foundation
- Over 420 healthcare organisations in the USA, and over 200 in the UK and Ireland, hold licences to run Rounds which are also beginning to be implemented in Australia and other countries (Maben et al 2021).

Aim of Schwartz Centre Rounds

- To explore the human and emotional aspects of the experience of delivering care and the challenges that staff face from day to day
- The purpose of the Rounds is not to solve problems

Schwartz Centre Rounds

- The Schwartz Rounds provide a structured forum for staff from all disciplines to discuss difficult emotional and social challenges that arise in caring for patients
 - They are usually once a month.
 - **ALL STAFF are invited** (clinical and non-clinical), recognising that each individual has something to contribute
 - They follow a specified, **evidence-based** format
 - The focus is not on the clinical aspects of the patient, but on **staff experience**
 - **No answers** or expertise are sought
 - The first 15 minutes is taken up by a patient's story being told by a panel (made up of two or three clinicians from different disciplines, who were involved in the care of the patient).
 - The following 45 minutes is for discussion, guided by a facilitator, exploring issues raised by the story
- Schwartz Rounds are a confidential, multidisciplinary forum designed for staff to come together once a month to reflect on the emotional and social experiences associated with their work.

The Schwartz Centre Round journey

Stage 1. Sourcing stories and panellists: Identifying patient cases suitable for a Schwartz Round, or a theme that will resonate, and finding staff willing to share their stories as panellists. Facilitator/s assisted by clinical lead and steering group undertake a behind-the-scenes hunt for stories/seek potential panellist volunteers.

Stage 2. Crafting and rehearsing stories in panel preparation: Involves one/more sessions between potential staff panellists (individually/group) and facilitators and /or clinical leads to identify aspects of stories that resonate with the audience and trigger reflection. Facilitators check the story is appropriate/safe and help panellists edit their story/ prepare for re-telling.

Stage 3: Telling stories to trigger reflection and create a counter-cultural space: This is the Round itself where facilitators, clinical leads, panellists and the audience interact to tell, listen and reflect upon stories which resonate, followed by the audience sharing similar experiences.

Stage 4: Post Round outcomes/ripple effects: As a result of attending Rounds staff change their behaviour (e.g. become more compassionate/self-compassionate) or decide to act/change their practice creating ripple effects in the organisation.

Adapted with permission from Maben et al (2018) (12)

Benefits of Schwartz Centre Rounds

- Evidence suggests that when staff feel positive about the care they are offering and feel that they are supported in providing that care, this is beneficial for them, the patients, and the organisation as a whole.

Personal Benefits

- Increased empathy, understanding and insight
- Concerns heard and validated
- Helps them to provide compassionate care
- Increased confidence in handling difficult or sensitive issues
- Acknowledging difficult feelings and reducing stress
- To be more open in expressing thoughts, feelings and questions about patient care with colleagues

Organisational Benefits

- Improve relationships between staff
- Improved team working
- A less hierarchical environment
- A culture of openness
- Transparency in the care we provide

Themes

“A person I can’t forget”

In at the “deep end”

“I wasn’t expecting that”

A day in the life of... (staff role)

“Why I come to work”

Trying to help in impossible circumstances

Working at night

The Menopause

References

- Maben, J., Taylor, C., Reynolds, E. *et al.* Realist evaluation of Schwartz rounds® for enhancing the delivery of compassionate healthcare: understanding how they work, for whom, and in what contexts. *BMC Health Serv Res* **21**, 709 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-021-06483-4>