Developing compassionate leadership in health care: an integrative review

Zulueta, P. C, 2016, Journal of Healthcare Leadership, Vol 18 (8), pgs 1-10

Background /Clinical Relevance

To look at how to develop compassionate leadership and why it is important.

Study Aim/ Objective

To arrive at proposals for the development of compassionate leadership in the modern healthcare context.

Method

- Integrative review
- Integrating perspectives from neuroscience, psychology, and complexity science with modern leadership and organizational theories.
- Providing a synthesis on the above leading to ways to develop compassionate leadership.

Results/Findings

The paper found several ways in which compassionate leadership could be developed:

- Appropriate training
- Well-being programmes
- Reflective practice
- Trust and mutually supportive connections
- Being able to speak out, without fear.
- Senior leaders to clearly define core values and visions of the service
- Breaking down of organisational silos.
- Compassionate care sometimes lost in the medical model
Discussion and Critique of Paper

- More of a narrative review than an integrative review (definitions below)
- Peer reviewed
- No Conflicts of interest from the author
- Well laid out, with clear headings for each topic, easy to read.

Key Limitations

- Author has not shown the search methods used to find information, so it cannot be replicated.
- Paper is from 2016, so some things may have already changed
- As it is an integrative/narrative review there may be some author bias

Clinical Relevance? Will this Change the Team’s Practice?

As a team a lot of these practices are already in place such as reflection sessions and the freedom to speak out. It is important to remember that different members of the team need different types of support and the importance of self-care, as it is difficult to be a compassionate leader if you are not taking care of yourself. An idea for the future is 360 degree feedback for managers, as this will give them an idea of what their staff think and help them to improve their leadership style.
What is an Integrative Review?

The integrative review is the methodology that pulls together the knowledge and applicability of results from significant studies:

- It can include non-experimental research, such as case studies, observational studies, and meta-analyses, but may also include practice applications, theory, and guidelines.
- It should have clear and precise search and selection criteria.
- The search and selection methodology should be described well enough for another researcher to duplicate the process.
- The selected literature should be analysed, not just summarized, articles and groups of articles compared, themes identified, gaps noted, etc.

What is a Narrative Review?

A Narrative review of literature is an informal and unsystematic method to collect and interpret information which is often summarised subjectively.

- They can be subject to bias as processes such as searching; quality appraisal and data synthesis are usually not described.
- Narrative reviews are conducted by ‘experts’ who usually have a thorough knowledge of the research.
- The author may have a preconceived notion or bias and may overestimate the value of some studies.
- Narrative reviews can be authoritative and informative since they depend on the subjective view of authors and can stimulate discussion and provoke controversy.
- Narrative reviews are more readable, relevant and can make clear recommendation for practice; these can be based solely on opinion and not in relation to existing evidence, which makes them more prone to bias.