



Compassion Fatigue Quality Improvement Initiative in a Cardiac Intensive Care Unit



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Background

Anecdotal concerns in a cardiac intensive care unit arose related to burnout (BO) and compassion fatigue (CF) among the nursing staff. The unit practice council proposed a quality improvement initiative to reduce both BO and CF.

Problem Statement

The practice council's goals were to:

- Educate the nursing staff regarding CF, BO, and compassion satisfaction (CS)
- Identify the degree of CF, BO, and CS among the staff
- Identify and implement unit-specific interventions to reduce CF and BO.

Methodology

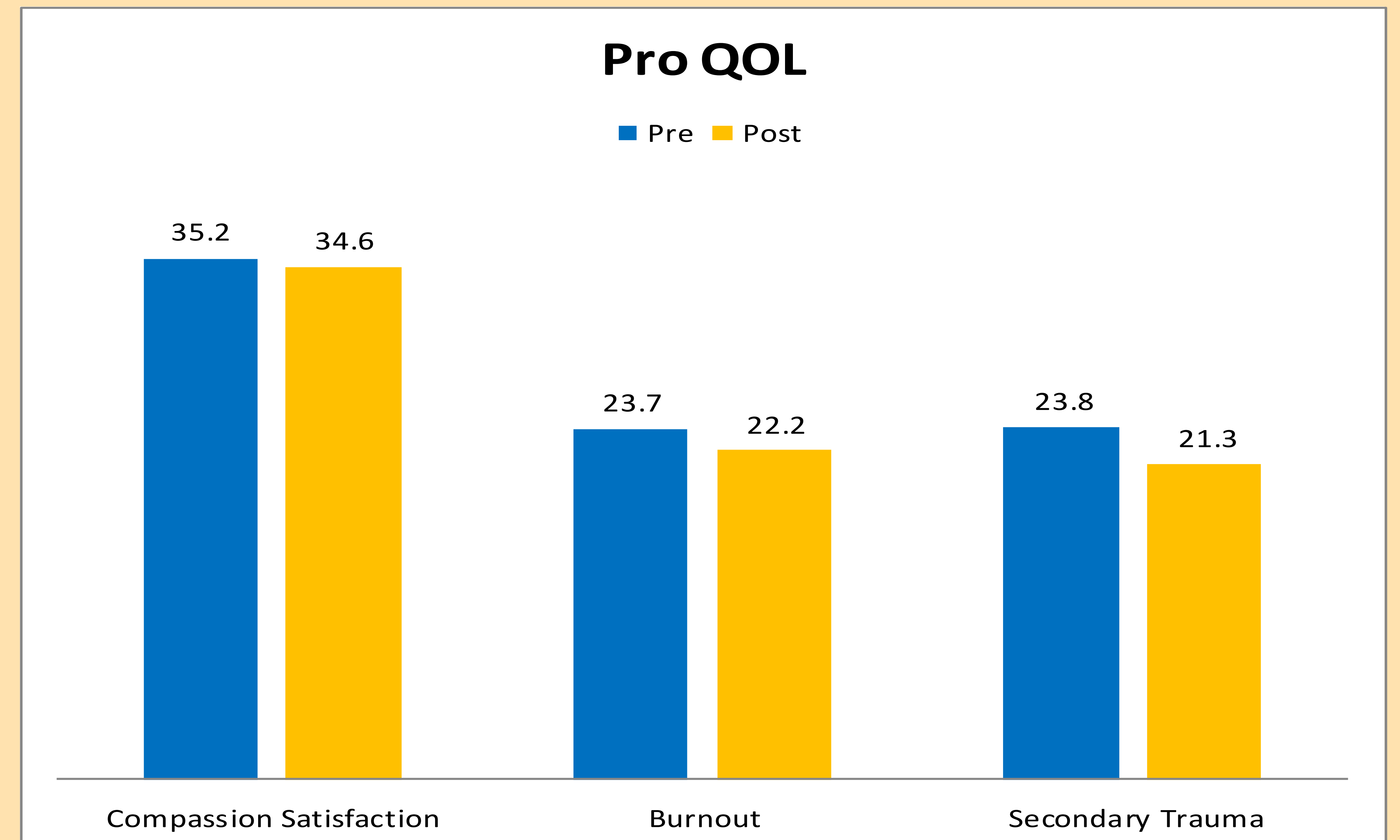
Nursing staff voluntarily took the Pro-Qol5 questionnaire to measure CF, BO, and CS and were asked to watch a CE direct module on CF. The monthly journal club discussed articles pertinent CF, BO, and resilience throughout all of 2015. A focus group developed a survey of unit-specific suggested interventions that was sent out to the nursing staff to rank order of importance.

Results

CICU staff nurses scored high on both BO and CF both pre and post testing, but maintained high CS throughout the process. The top 5 interventions chosen by the nursing staff were to:

- Have a formal debrief after code blue
- Have organized social art therapy outside of work
- Create a meditation room with “do not disturb” signage
- Quarterly chair massages for staff
- Provide formal shift mentoring for new nurses.

Mean CS, BO and CF scores - pre and post intervention.



Conclusions / Lessons Learned

Despite the fact that the unit nurses scored high on BO and CF both pre and post, resilience of the nursing staff remained high throughout.

Although there is foreseen value in the identified interventions, the change of unit culture is identified as the greatest barrier, as identified below:

- Post-code debrief need interdisciplinary buy-in, as it is more effective to include the physician team leader and other members of the code team.
- “Formal” shift mentoring vs. informal senior nurse availability
- Encouragement to utilize meditation room

Next Steps

- Incorporate members of the interdisciplinary team to post-code debrief
- Unit leadership to ensure pairing of new nurses with senior nurses through appropriate skill mix scheduling and continual reinforcement of new processes.