

Leadership and Communication During COVID-19

David Farrell, MSW, LNHA

My Perspective – A NH Administrator

- Like a cruise ship
- Fear
- Mandates you can't follow
- Testing = Frustration
- Ever changing guidance

I am a NH Administrator

- Emotionally demanding
- Overwhelmed
- Leadership opportunity

How Do You Want to be Remembered After This?

- **“Be the leader that the staff needs me to be.”**
- **Validate, support, encourage**
- **Act calm**
- **Share everything that you know**
- **Cite sources and data**
- **Predictability**

What Matters Most During COVID-19

Leaders...You Matter Most!!

- Management cares
- Management listens
- Help with job stress

Person-Centered Care Leadership

Balancing Performance with Compassion



How to Stay on Top of All of the Changes

Monitor Daily -

- **CDC, CMS, DHCS, AHCA, LeadingAge, Consumer Voice, AMDA, IHI, Pioneer Network, CAHF, McKnight's LTC News, Skilled Nursing News, CALTCM, Research Studies, News Articles, Expert Testimony at Congressional Subcommittee Hearings...**

Prescient *adjective*

- Having or showing knowledge of events before they take place; having foresight.
 - *The prescient Administrator had all her staff wearing surgical masks three weeks prior to the state mandate.*
 - *The prescient DON made sure to order the flu vaccine early and had all of the residents vaccinated in early September.”*

Dr. Nimalie Stone, MD

“Being the first to implement restrictions and interventions - those are the ones who have kept it out or minimized the outbreak.”

What More Can Leaders Do?

- **Weekly webinars for families**
- **Proactively call families**
- **Dedicated and identified staff for COVID wing**
- **Feed the staff safely**
- **Groceries for staff**
- **Hotel rooms for staff**
- **Generous sick and quarantine pay policies**
- **Clean scrubs each shift**
- **Choose one job**

Staff Unknowingly Infect the Residents

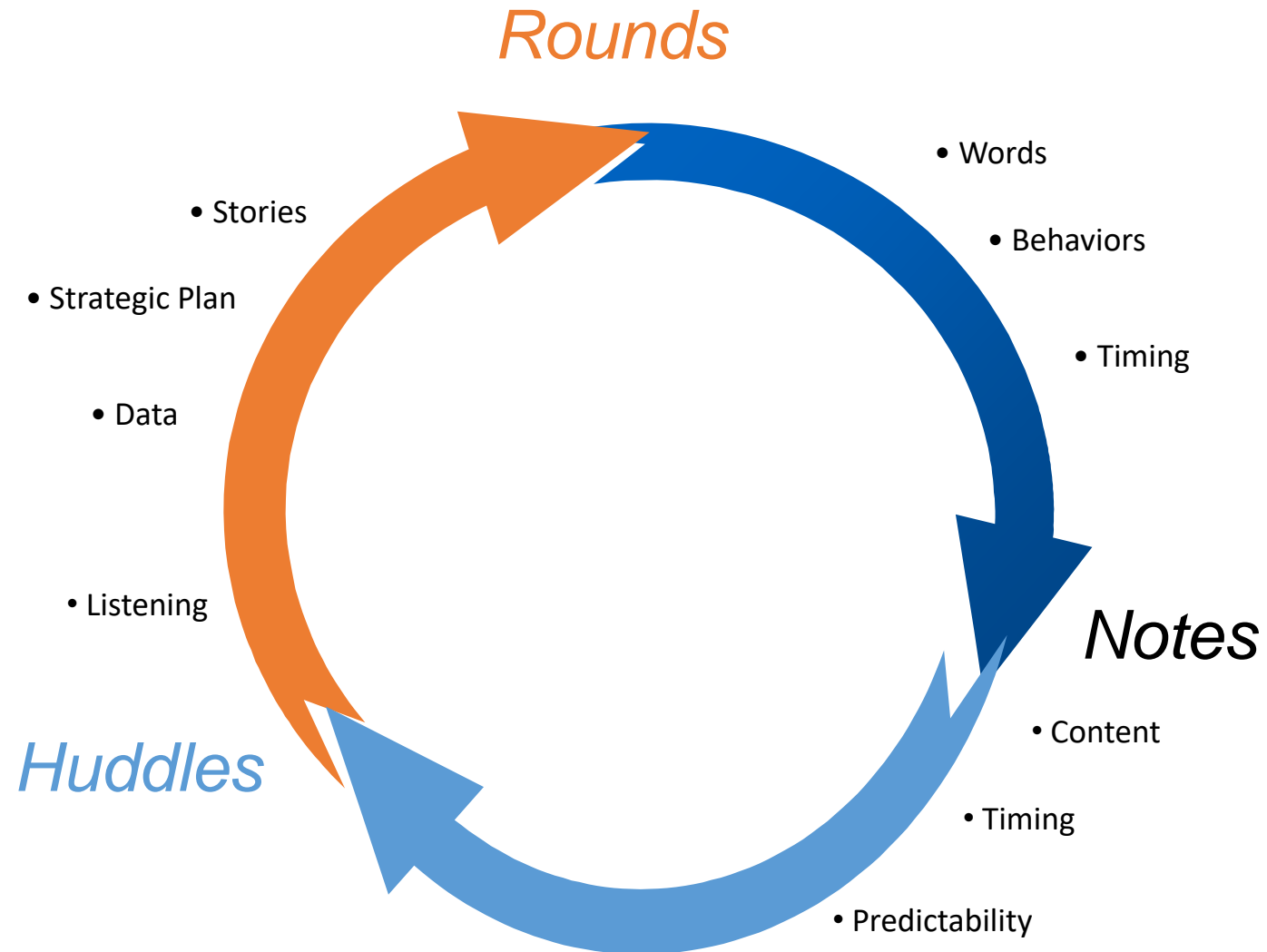
- **UCLA Findings using Device-Level Geolocation data**
 - Measured staff connections to multiple SNFs
 - A SNFs degree of connections predicts C-19 cases
- **CDC Findings from Kirkland, WA**
 - Staff members working in multiple SNFs
 - Staff working while symptomatic
- **NY Department of Health Findings**
 - Thousands of staff who were infected in mid-March transmitted the virus unknowingly

Chen, K. Et Al. 2020
DHHS, CDC. March 2020
NYSDOH. July 2020

Bundle of Leadership Best Practices

For Creating the Right Conditions for Employee Engagement
Under
COVID-19

Creating the Right Conditions— Leadership Practices



Purposeful Leadership Rounds During COVID-19

- High visibility
- Keen observations
- Verbal
- You are in the spotlight
- Make eye contact
- Say – “I’m smiling right now.”
- Linger
- Assist

Rounds – What to Say and Do

Trigger higher performance -

- Say - “I am worried about...I am proud about...thanks for helping her with that...that was nice of you...the residents really love you...I notice that you really care...thanks for being here today...I really like working with you”
- Do – Answer call lights...hold doors open...sit in the break room... don the PPE and sit at the end of a residents bed and talk to them...carry a leftover food tray back to the kitchen...move a linen barrel to the right spot...slow down...go look everywhere...

Five Key Questions to Ask When Making Rounds

- **Relationship building**
 - “How is your family and how are your beautiful kids doing?”
- **Focus on the positive**
 - “What is working well to keep everyone safe today?”
- **Positive feedback loop**
 - “Is there anybody that you are working with who has gone above and beyond the call of duty today?”
- **QI – Infection Control**
 - “Is there anything we can do better to keep the virus out today?”
- **Needs**
 - “Do you have the PPE, enough coworkers and the right equipment to do your job well today?”

Administrator Notes to Staff During COVID-19

Monday's Note from the Administrator

Congratulations to Cynthia Poppens – May Employee of the Month! Also – Congratulations to Laurianne Niko – May Rookie of the Month! Both of these C.N.A.'s exemplify our core values and follow our strict infection control protocols to the letter. It's an honor to work with both of you! You both stepped up and worked extra shifts during the outbreak. On behalf of everyone here – thank you!

- Thanks you for accepting and wearing your new name badges with your pictures. By displaying your name and face the residents can read them and can help identify who you are. Don't forget to always introduce yourself to the residents and coworkers.
- It is Monday morning and I see great people here... who show up... everyday... follow our strict infection control guidelines... we are so proud of all of you!
- Our commitment to widespread testing and our data reflects that we are starting to turn the tide! Both the positivity rate and total positive cases are declining. I am starting to feel more optimistic and you should too!

I continue to proudly serve as your Administrator. If you need anything, please come and see me, call my cell phone or send me an email. Thank you for all that you are doing to enhance our residents' lives during these challenging times!

Sincerely,

David Farrell, Administrator

510-725-7409

Elements of a Good Note

- Informative
- Complimentary
- Standard setting
- Update on PIPs
- Point out positive trends
- Staffing changes
- Sincere

Take Time to Write Some Thanks You Cards

- Cards are powerful motivators
 - Birthday cards
 - Anniversary cards
 - Excellent attendance
 - Infection control champion!
 - “I appreciate you”
 - “I am glad you work for us. On behalf of the residents, their families and your co-workers – Thank you.”
 - Mail to their home address

COVID-19 Huddles

- **Ensure everyone has the same information**
 - *Everyone can pitch in and work together*
 - *Everyone knows who tested positive or negative and who is on watch list*
 - *Everyone knows the interventions that work*
- **Promote collaboration**
 - *Everyone's input is received*
 - *Everyone is a part of problem-solving*
 - *Everyone knows they are valued*

Successful Huddles

- Consistent and reliable
- Share Data – test results, cases, PPE counts, community numbers
- Stop Rumors
- Tell a story – from percentages to people
- Transparency – cautious optimism
- Teachable moments
- Predictability

David Farrell, LNHA, MSW
(510) 725-7409
djfarrell1963@yahoo.com