Employee Gentleness

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General Research Questions

1. What is employee gentleness?

2. How is employee gentleness organized and fostered within organisations?

Method

Phase 1: Interview based studies

- Palliative day care centre, 8 palliative care nurses
- Support agency for children and teenagers, 8 case workers
- Interviewees were asked to describe a gentle interaction with a patient or client

Phase 2 : Ethnography

- *Hospice day care centre*
  - >40 days of observation over 3 month period, & interviews
- *2 residential care homes*
  - currently ongoing

Method

Phase 2 : Ethnography of hospice day care centre

- *Staff*
  - Senior nurse, 3 Nurses, Nursing assistant, Art therapist, Volunteers, Student nurse
  - Access to Doctor, Hairdresser, Occupational Health Therapists, Social Worker, Complementary Therapist

- *Patients*
  - Referred for medical support, pain control and psycho-social support, end-of-life support
  - Attend for 8-12 weeks
  - Typical patient day
    - Attend 10am-3pm
    - Greeting: Tea and toast around 'TV' table, nurse catch-up
    - 10am-12.15am: Chat, activities, seeing medical & other support staff
    - 12.15-1pm: Lunch
    - 1pm-3pm: Chat, activities, seeing medical & support staff.

1. What is employee gentleness?

A particular form of caregiving that:

– is soft and slow

– is warm and friendly

– involves emotion regulation

– and characterised by certain motives and goals

Different to related concepts, e.g., compassion, empathy

Findings: What is Employee Gentleness?

1a. Soft and Slow approach

- **Slow interaction**
  - Not rushing, silences, taking time to unfold
- **Verbal & non-verbal behaviour**
  - soft touch and voice
  - slow movement

Findings: What is Employee Gentleness?

1b. Warm & Friendly Behaviours

- **Guidance behaviour**
  - offering and talking through (interpreting) advice and support

- **Responsive behaviour**
  - empathy, demonstrating concern, non-judgemental acceptance, validation

- **Dynamic & synchronised**
  - Switching between guidance and responsive affiliative behaviour

Findings: What is Employee Gentleness?

1c. Emotion Regulation

- **Regulating patient emotions**
  - reducing negative emotions (e.g. fear, anxiety) and promoting positive emotions (e.g. calmness, contentment)

- **Regulating own affect**
  - focus on patient

Findings: What is Employee Gentleness?

1d. Motives & Goals

- **Pro-Social**
  - Patient & relationship orientated (e.g. seeking trust and disclosure)

2. How is employee gentleness organised & fostered within organisations?

Employee gentleness

- emerges from the care giving process in response to patient need (especially patient distress, patient transitions)

- fostered by formal and informal routines (e.g. routines of enquiry, attention, accessibility) and resources (e.g. job autonomy, organisational & role norms)

Employee Gentleness:

- A particular form of caregiving (soft and slow; warm and friendly; emotion regulation; certain motives & goals)

- different to related concepts such as compassion, empathy

- fostered by certain types of organisational routines and resources

- Different types of gentleness?

- Problems of gentleness?