Enhancing healthcare workers' understanding of the medico-legal landscape in an acute hospital

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Problem Statement

Healthcare Workers (HCWs) face immense responsibility to adhere to legal and regulatory requirements while providing quality patient care. Using root cause analysis, a **knowledge gap among HCWs in their understanding of the medico-legal landscape** was identified. This increases their risk of legal implications. The management of complaints and claims also causes anxiety among HCWs and substantial financial burden on the healthcare system.

Project Aim

The project aims to address the **lack of structured education for HCWs on the ML landscape and its implications** through the introduction of education and outreach programmes implemented from January to December 2022. Feedback on the impact of the programmes were obtained through surveys.

Lessons Learnt

To **encourage HCWs to take charge of their professional development and growth,** the project team is working with HR to promote the programmes as part of the HCWs' learning roadmap. This gives HCWs the autonomy to prioritise their own learning and acquire the knowledge needed before assuming more senior roles in the organisation.

A repository of case studies was also created to **increase relevancy of the programmes** to all job groups.

Potential Solutions

The project team implemented **a series of education and outreach efforts in four areas:**

Engaging leadership
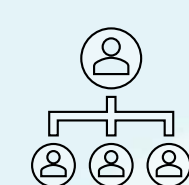
- Briefings for new leadership to introduce information on managing adverse events and ML cases
- Promotes understanding of key processes, allows clarification of misconceptions, and fuels a collective sense of team engagement

Fostering awareness

- Talks covering the latest ML regulations and thematic issues are organised
- Introduction of a four modular ML education series covering fundamentals such as clinical negligence, consent, alternative dispute resolution and open communication

Building local expertise

- Local experts were appointed as department reps to play a supportive role in complaint management
- Department specific talks customized based on topics of interest

Learning from experience

- A learning repository made up of easily digestible information decks summarising the sequence of events, case analysis, corrective and preventive measures, legal orientation, and key learning lessons was developed

Outcomes & Impacts

99.2% felt the sharing of real-life cases and role plays helped them **learn to better manage adverse events and complaints***

97.6% indicated they **gained new and useful knowledge** from the medico-legal topics shared*

Respondents shared that the "**trainers were excellent with great skills**" and there was a "**good balance between theory and practical skills**".

Suggestions received from respondents were also considered when refining future programmes to meet the changing needs of HCWs.

*out of 127 respondents