Helping others understand a behavioral intervention team's function and purpose can be a challenge at times. When you compound the complexity of what we do with the existing gaps in communication and structure of our dynamic organizations, one of the groups that struggles the most to understand our work is often those in the academic units. Providing more information and a chance to process the intricacy of our function will allow faculty the opportunity to not only understand our work, but also lead to increased reports of student concerns.

Here are a few ideas to help you and your team structure a basic training workshop to achieve this kind of understanding:

What elements should be included in the training?
- Team membership – give names and titles
- The Team's mission and purpose
- Importance of understanding we all contribute to a culture of reporting
- How the team functions and conducts their business
- Key partners throughout the institution
- Challenges encountered on a regular basis and how they are overcome
- The faculty member's role in this process
- Resources available to assist faculty
- How/where to report concerns and what information should be included
- Provide examples/scenarios – make them current and as close to real as possible without disclosing student information.

Other tips to make the training successful:

Have the entire Team present. The faculty need to recognize the names and faces of the team members in order to encourage reporting. If you are able to present to a large group, have each member do some speaking so they get to know how they fit in to the team and understand their role. If you're doing smaller sessions, have at least a few team members present.

Include other faculty. Choose a few champions and partners you work well with – who understand the concept of intervention and who have demonstrated good judgement in reporting concerns. Faculty may be more receptive to hearing advice from others they perceive to be in similar situations. Ask them to speak about their experiences with the Team and what they've learned from those interactions.

Involve student testimony. Make it real for them so they understand the impact their action or inaction has on the learning environment in their classroom. If possible, conduct a panel discussion and guide students through a few prompted questions.

Share the Threat Assessment Tool with them. Talk it through with them if you have time. Help them to understand how the different teams/groups on your campus respond to each level of behavior on your campus. When they submit a low-level concern, those we would codify in the "greens," your BIT may respond with resources and support. What about those "yellows"? Who are the individuals who would be involved with a disciplinary issue and what are the kinds of sanctions that would be associated? And what about the times the campus receives a message regarding a student as a security threat? Talk through the membership of your crisis response team and the resources the institution has in place to respond. Once faculty can grasp the bigger picture, it will demystify the system we use for assisting our students who display concerning behavior at any level.

Work with the academic leadership to arrange for the most productive avenue to conduct these learning opportunities. Reach out to the deans and department chairs to find out what will work best for their faculty. Attend department meetings. If you are lucky enough to work at an institution where mandatory in-services are required of faculty, find out who organizes those well in advance and ask to have the topic featured. You can always do follow-up sessions in smaller groups if you are only able to get a small amount of time on the agenda to introduce the topic.

Given the amount of time our faculty spend with students and the fact that they may be the only ones who are seeing signs of distress, especially when it comes to commuters or non-traditional populations, our Teams cannot afford to overlook the importance of engaging faculty in dialogue about our work. The benefits and reporting that will come as a result of it will make the efforts worthwhile.

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