TRENDING

One Doctor's Odd Decision to Write His Name on the Scrub Cap Changed Safety in Hospitals Globally

By bestfolkmedicine · 20/09/2022 · 3 min read



Without a doubt, doctors, nurses, surgeons, and all medical professionals deserve praise and recognition for their work which saves lives.

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But, emergency care often deals with the chaos that can lead to avoidable mistakes. One such moment led one doctor to make a small change and reduce such mistakes.

This Sydney-based anesthetist, Dr. Rob Hackett, noticed delays in time-sensitive procedures on patients due to doctors being unable to remember each other's professions and names.

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Hackett also saw incidents during which the medical students were asked to do something they were not qualified for because someone mistook them for a qualified surgeon.

In an effort to reduce such mistakes, Dr. Hackett did something simple, but life-saving. It's now a viral thing.

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Doctor's Simple Decision Changes Safety in Hospitals Globally

Dr. Hackett decided to write his name on his scrub cap. This simple, but effective solution lowers the risk of delays and mistakes between colleagues, but it also shows patients that doctors are humans behind all the equipment they're wearing.

He considers this very important for the safety of patients and he also launched an online awareness campaign under the hashtag #TheatreCapChallenge. He asks other doctors to do the same and reduce mistakes in their working place.

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Although the trend took off slowly, after a little over one year, his life-saving idea is now something hospitals worldwide are doing.

He collaborates with PatientSafe Network to offer a response to the worries about avoidable mistakes and lack of communication that are causing adversity for patients, according to Dr. Hackett.

This challenge has been adopted worldwide, with studies from the UK and US showing how this simple idea can lower healthcare human errors.

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When Was the Decisive Moment that Resulted in Dr. Hackett Writing His Name on the Scrub Cap?

One day on the job, Dr. Hackett was on a cardiac arrest call in the operating room. There were around 20 other professionals in the room with him, trying to save the patient's life.

And, in emergencies like this one, every second matters. The problem was that Dr. Hackett couldn't communicate well with the nurses and staff about what he needed.

He had a problem asking for some gloves. He was pointing to a person but they thought he was pointing to the person behind them. He knew he had to do something. He wrote his name and occupation on his cap. In this way, the staff knows who's behind the protective gear and what he does.

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However, not everyone accepted this new trend. At first, Dr. Hackett says how his colleagues would poke fun at him for having his name on the cap.

They joked that he can't remember his name.

However, little did they know that a year later, this would become a global trend in the medical world.

Today, medical staff worldwide is encouraged to share photos of their labeled scrub caps and show how they're reducing avoidable accidents and mistakes in life-or-death situations.

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There Is a Human Side to this Trend too, Says Dr. Hickett

Staff with their names and occupations written on their caps isn't just easing communication and efficiency in operating rooms. It's also showing patients that their doctors are humans.

And, studies on this movement done in the UK found that name recall among hospital staff increased from 2 percent to 85 percent. And, name and role introductions that are part of the protocol for surgery safety increased from 38 percent to 90 percent.

Being able to read doctors' names on their equipment is also reassuring for patients, especially the ones awake during a procedure, like a woman during a C-section.

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