The RTS Hosting Experience

Michelle Dishman of John Muir Medical Center knew that her system could benefit from hosting an RTS training event: “I had previously attended the training several years ago and knew the quality of the training. I have seen circumstances where staff needed more support in this area.”

When John Muir Medical Center decided to do just that, Michelle stepped in as the main contact to the RTS National Office. Her hosting responsibilities included confirming a room for the event and making arrangements for food and AV equipment. RTS staff was with Michelle every step of the way, offering guidance during regularly scheduled conference calls and providing event materials to help her stay on track.

After the training, we asked Michelle about her role in hosting an RTS training event.

RTS: How were you able to secure funding?
MD: Through an endowment fund set up by a family who experienced a loss.
RTS: How did you garner support from leadership?
MD: Explaining the need and having a source of funding to support it.
RTS: What was it like working with the RTS National Office and/or the RTS National Faculty?
MD: The office and faculty were incredibly easy to work with. Everyone seemed experienced and organized.
RTS: What was the most rewarding part of hosting RTS training?
MD: Feeling like the training will make a difference for our patients/families.
RTS: What was the most challenging aspect of hosting RTS training?
MD: It was the first time for me to host training such as this. There were a few hurdles in arranging things but that was because it was a new process to me.
RTS: What advice do you have for somebody who is considering hosting RTS training?
MD: Follow the checklists provided by the RTS National Office. They really help to keep you on track.

Do You Have a Story for the RTS Connection?
Do you have a story you would like to see featured in the RTS Connection? Let us know what is happening in your RTS bereavement program or community. Here are some topic ideas to get you thinking:

• How do you incorporate RTS training in your organization/system?
• If you are an RTS Coordinator, what tips do you have for other Coordinators who deliver RTS training?
• Have there been recent innovations in your RTS bereavement program?
• How is your RTS bereavement program involved in the community?

Stories can be submitted to the RTS Connection by emailing rts@gundsenhealth.org.
Walk to Remember

When a child loses his parent, they are called an orphan. When a spouse loses her or his partner, they are called a widow or widower. When parents lose their child, there isn’t a word to describe them. This month recognizes the loss so many parents experience across the United States and around the world. It is also meant to inform and provide resources for parents who have lost children due to miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, molar pregnancy, stillbirths, birth defects, SIDS, and other causes. – Ronald Reagan

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan designated October as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month. Fourteen years later, three bereaved mothers petitioned to designate October 15th as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day. Their efforts were proved successful on September 28, 2006 when Concurrent Resolution 222, supporting the goals and ideals of National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, was passed.

Since Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month was established, Resolve Through Sharing has supported and attended an annual Walk to Remember in La Crosse. The event is open to the public and provides an opportunity for the community to come together to honor the babies who have died. This year’s walk took place on a rainy day, but that did not discourage attendees. People of all ages came to honor the babies and support the loved ones who carry their babies’ memories with them.

Community Grief

Written by Dr. Rana Limbo

Community grief brings with it the pain and suffering that comes about when those we know well or do not know at all touch us in ways we may not expect. In the past few months, we have seen communities come together in response to various disasters and tragedies. We watched a daughter whose mother died look for the words to describe unspeakable grief. Finally, she was able to say her mother was her best friend. Nearly everyone whether they knew the one who died or not, talks in relational terms: “I am a father, and I thought of my own sons.”

We need a chief of grief, one whose words let us know it is not only OK, but expected that we are drawn to this larger community of mourners, that we feel a part of them. We need our chief to say that it is understandable that uncertainty leaves us afraid and unsure of what to do next, that we are overwhelmed thinking that something could happen to our own loved ones. And when something does, we feel alone, abandoned, and in need of relationships that will help our hearts to hurt less. We have a need for connection, for someone to say, “I’m so sorry your baby died.”

Whether reading or posting online, making a donation, meditating, praying, talking to someone else who feels like you feel, or participating in a ritual, you will find ways to connect. In doing so, something will change. It may not be right away, it may not be a lot, but your heart will let you know that someone out there is on your side, is experiencing what you are. Their expression will be honest, and you will have a moment when you know that there will be brighter days. Until then, please remember that we at Resolve Through Sharing hold you in our hearts.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria
Mexico Earthquake
Las Vegas Shooting
Sonoma Valley Wildfires
Sutherland Springs, TX Shooting
Rancho Tehama, CA Shooting
Congratulations to RTS Lead Educator, Marie Walter, and RTS Associate Director and Senior Consultant, Dr. Rana Limbo, whose journal articles were selected by MCN, The American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing to be published ahead of print! The articles, which will appear in the January/February special topics issue on miscarriage, are currently free to access online. Follow the links below to read the full articles.

Clinical Aspects of Miscarriage by Marie A. Walter and Mary S. Alvarado
Respectful Disposition after Miscarriage: Clinical Practice Recommendations by Elizabeth Levang, Rana Limbo, and Tammara Ruiz Ziegler

Publications

RTS Bereavement Training Schedule

Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Frisco, Frisco, TX
- Perinatal Death, January 31-February 1, 2018
- Coordinator Training, February 2, 2018

UC Davis Children’s Hospital and the Children’s Miracle Network, Sacramento, CA
- Perinatal Death, April 9-10, 2018
- Coordinator Training, April 11, 2018

Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA
- Perinatal Death, May 23-24, 2018
- Coordinator Training, May 25, 2018

Gundersen Health System, La Crosse, WI
- Perinatal Death, August 6-7, 2018
- Adult Death, August 6-7, 2018
- Coordinator Training, August 8, 2018

Exhibits

NICU Leadership Forum at The Marriott Sawgrass, Ponte Vedra, FL
April 22-26, 2018

Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care at the Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI
April 30-May 2, 2018

International Perinatal Bereavement Conference at the St. Louis Union Station hotel, St. Louis, MO
October 24-27, 2018

Perinatal Leadership Forum

Exhibits

NICU Leadership Forum at The Marriott Sawgrass, Ponte Vedra, FL
April 22-26, 2018

Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care at the Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake, WI
April 30-May 2, 2018

International Perinatal Bereavement Conference at the St. Louis Union Station hotel, St. Louis, MO
October 24-27, 2018

RTS Manager and Business Development Consultant, Nathan Haase, and RTS Business Coordinator and e-Learning Specialist, Andrew Manson, recently exhibited at the 2017 Perinatal Leadership Forum in Phoenix, AZ, where they were able to connect with over 150 leaders in healthcare.