

Supplementary table

Supplementary table S1a-d. Top six list items with the greatest difference in salience between hospital staff with more years of professional experience and fewer years of working experience for each of four interview questions.

Table S1a. Interview question: how to notice emotional distress.

Higher salience items for staff members with more years of professional experience		Higher salience items for staff members with fewer years of professional experience	
List item	Difference in salience	List item	Difference in salience
<i>Crying</i> : Descriptions include crying, tears and weeping.	-0.400	<i>The person will tell you</i> : Patients are able to say that they are distressed, such as describing an emotion.	0.168
<i>Agitation</i> : The words 'agitation' or 'agitated' are used; verbal or physical agitation is described.	-0.384	<i>Body language or posture</i> : Including descriptions of a patient waving, pointing or putting hands to their head.	0.159
<i>Unsettled, fidgety, not relaxed, fiddling</i> : Being unsettled was described; descriptions include fiddling, fidgeting, fussing with items, tearing items, pulling at clothing or equipment, being flustered or unable to settle.	-0.320	<i>Face or facial expression</i> .	0.130
<i>Aggression</i> : The terms 'aggression' or 'aggressive' were used without further description. Descriptions included.	-0.250	<i>Easily visible</i> : Distress was visible and seen by looking at somebody; or distress is obvious; 'it's not hard to tell'.	0.111
<i>Anxious or frightened</i> .	-0.207	<i>It is different patient to patient</i> : state distress is shown differently by different people; can include distress depending on the person's life experiences.	0.105
<i>Knowing the person</i> : To be able to notice distress; the patient not being their usual self, something being different.	-0.142	<i>Behaviour or actions</i> : Sometimes described as a change for the person.	0.097

Table S1b. Interview question: causes of emotional distress.

Higher salience items for staff members with more years of professional experience		Higher salience items for staff members with fewer years of professional experience	
List item	Difference in salience	List item	Difference in salience
<i>The hospital environment</i> : An unfamiliar, new or foreign setting; this included descriptions of an intrusive environment and descriptions of hospital bays and beds.	-0.242	<i>Lots of different things</i> : staff said there are lots of/a variety/a myriad of things that cause distress; the causes can change; the reasons for distress need to be worked out or analysed.	0.151

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<i>Infection.</i>	-0.153	<i>Being confused.</i>	0.117
<i>Frustration.</i>	-0.143	<i>Strangers:</i> Unfamiliar or unknown people, unfamiliar faces and voices and patients not knowing who is around them.	0.113
<i>Delirium.</i>	-0.129	<i>Being too hot or too cold.</i>	0.098
<i>Missing belongings and objects:</i> being without familiar things such as a teddy bear and sleeping in a different bed.	-0.129	<i>Hunger or thirst.</i>	0.096
<i>Not knowing where they are:</i> Disorientation, asking where they are and not knowing that they are in hospital.	-0.112	<i>Memory problems:</i> forgetfulness, forgetting having their questions answered, forgetting reassurance, being unable to recall their date of birth or items on a cognitive screening tool.	0.091

Table S1c. Interview question: responses to emotional distress.

Higher salience items for staff members with more years of professional experience		Higher salience items for staff members with fewer years of professional experience	
List item	Difference in salience	List item	Difference in salience
<i>Space:</i> staff listed offering a different or preferred environment, room or space. This included using the café away from the ward.	-0.221	<i>Comfort:</i> Included descriptions of being calming or nurturing.	0.167
<i>Reassurance:</i> listed without further description.	-0.144	<i>Ask the person:</i> asking what the matter is or why they are distressed, asking what they would like.	0.093
<i>Empathise:</i> Trying to understand, tuning in to what is troubling them, getting into their mind-set or universe; telling them they understand.	-0.137	<i>Talking:</i> Sharing conversation and stories; included talking whilst walking.	0.091
<i>A cup of tea.</i>	-0.130	<i>Leave them:</i> included allowing space for the patient to let off steam or wind down, being hands off, allowing them liberty, not stopping somebody from wandering, staff keeping their distance for the safety of colleagues or patients.	0.091
<i>Touch:</i> included holding a person's hand or offering a hug.	-0.127	<i>Mirroring:</i> Mirroring the person, their actions or volume; described building off each other.	0.069
<i>Body language:</i> listed without further explanation, meaning staff used their body language in their response.	-0.123	<i>Identify the cause or reason for distress:</i> identifying the problem or the need; fathoming, working out or getting to the grounds of the distress.	0.057

Table S1d. Interview question: responses to emotional distress that seem to work.

Higher salience items for staff members with more years of professional experience		Higher salience items for staff members with fewer years of professional experience	
List item	Difference in salience	List item	Difference in salience
<i>Space:</i> offering a different or preferred environment,	-0.280	<i>Knowing the person:</i> Staff described having to know or get to know the person; included each person being	0.271

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room or space. This included quiet and still spaces.		different/unique; being person-centred; being patient-led; different responses working for different people.	
<i>Touch</i> : descriptions of touch included holding a person's hand or offering a hug.	-0.133	<i>It depends on the circumstances.</i>	0.174
<i>It depends on the level of distress.</i>	-0.126	<i>Listen</i> : Included telling and showing the patient they are listening.	0.148
<i>Sitting with, being with, engaging with.</i> Included descriptions of giving attention and being a person without uniform or equipment.	-0.099	<i>Change the member of staff</i> : Included changing to a more familiar staff member or changing to a male or female staff member.	0.117
<i>All/any responses</i> : Anything, everything or all of them was listed.	-0.076	<i>Talking</i> : sharing conversation, chatting, communicating.	0.114
<i>Activities.</i>	-0.067	<i>Sometimes can't help</i> : Staff said they sometimes couldn't help, sometimes nothing works or a response doesn't work; responses that work are never guaranteed.	0.093
