Why is this needed at Shands at UF?
Results from a recent survey of multiple disciplines overwhelmingly supported an organizational approach to providing compassionate care to those involved in adverse events.

Program Goals
The goals of this program are to increase the awareness of the needs of these second victims and develop second victim support for nurses, physicians, pharmacists, and allied healthcare workers that are involved in any unanticipated patient event.

Three aspects of support will be developed in this program:
1. Local support-which encompasses the unit and departmental area.
2. Peer support-Peer supporters are trained to provide crisis intervention. A 24-hour deployment of peer support is provided.
3. Referral network support-referral network support is established with the Employee Assistance Program, chaplain services, social work, and clinical psychologists.

Second Victims Reaction
Frequently, these individuals feel personally responsible for the patient outcome. Many feel as though they have failed the patient, second guessing their clinical skills and knowledge base.

Medical errors and unanticipated patient outcomes are equally devastating. Regardless of job title, staff respond in predictable behaviors. The first tendency of staff is isolation.

Commonly Reported Symptoms:
- Extreme Fatigue
- Rapid Heart Rate
- Muscle Tension
- Frustration
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Loss of Confidence
- Sleep Disturbances
- Increased Blood Pressure
- Rapid Breathing
- Decreased Job Satisfaction
- Flashbacks
- Grief / Remorse

Funding Support:
Funding support obtained from the Interdisciplinary Patient Quality and Safety Award (IPQSA) Program co-sponsored by The UF College of Medicine Continuing Medical Education and the UF J. Hillis Miller Health Science Center Self-Insurance Program.

There is no cost to employees who participate in this program.

HOW TO GET PEER SUPPORT
If you would like peer support contact the Nursing Coordinator at 494-5740. The Nursing Coordinator is available 24 hours a day.
Peer support will be offered within 24 hours.
Care for Colleagues – Supporting Our Staff

Second Victims
Medical errors and unexpected outcomes occur in all organizations. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) estimates that thousands of deaths occur per year due to medical errors. Any adverse event, not just those that result in death, can have a devastating effect on the health care worker involved.

The term “second victims” has been used in the literature to describe health care workers that may sustain complex psychological harm when they have been involved in errors that harm patients. Often the resulting response to those errors punishes and isolates the health care worker. The health care worker is often unable to successfully process the feelings of fear, sadness, guilt and shame. This program was developed as an organizational response to support health care workers that become “second victims.”

Program Purpose
The Care for Colleagues program provides support to our health care workers in all disciplines after an adverse event. The stressful clinical events can include traumatic clinical events, failure to rescue efforts following prolonged intervention, the death of a patient, and any other event that is emotionally challenging. Peer supporters are trained to provide crisis intervention, team briefing and mentoring. Providing psychological first aid and continuing support will allow the health care worker to regain their sense of competence and skill, and continue to be a productive member of the health care team. This program develops a compassionate team response of support for our colleagues.

Peer Supporter Role
Peer supporters from all disciplines complete 8 hours of paid continuing education designed to prepare the supporter to provide front-line crisis intervention. Peer supporters will include both hourly and salaried staff who can act as on-call contacts for alerting in-house supporters.

The peer supporter role is to provide emotional support or “emotional first aid” to second victims. Peer supporters are trained to provide information about the recovery process and referral options.

Care for Colleagues Peer Supporters are not counselors, but peers who have good listening and supportive skills. Strategies are individualized to meet the second victim’s needs. The focus of the supportive conversations are the second victim’s response to the situation, not the details of the event. Support provided is kept in a strictly confidential manner. All necessary documentation is maintained in the Care for Colleagues secure database.

Program Specifics
- Once a need for peer support has been determined at the departmental level, a call is initiated to the Nursing Coordinator.
- The Nursing Coordinator contacts the on-call peer supporter.
- The on-call supporter will access the Care for Colleagues schedule and contacts an in-house peer supporter who can provide support as early as possible, and within 24 hours after the incident.
- Routinely scheduled education meetings for peer supporters will be planned to evaluate progress toward the achievement of program objectives.

Peer Supporter Eligibility
- Must be a Shands at UF employee or UF Physician employee with at least 2 years of Shands hospital experience.
- Must demonstrate a willingness to respond to calls, provide compassionate support, and complete non-identifying encounter forms.
- Must be recommended by management team.
- Must plan to remain employed by Shands at UF or UF Physicians for at least 1 year post completion of training.

If you are interested in becoming a peer supporter or would like more information about the program, please email Markus Dietrich, dietrm@shands.ufl.edu or call the Employee Assistance Program at 352.265.5493.