

# Kollegiale Hilfe (KoHi)

## Mental first aid provided by colleagues at Clinic Hietzing, Vienna

### Systematic Collegial Help Program (KoHi) –

Description of an intervention program to reduce the impact of stressful work situations in terms of the "Second Victim" phenomenon among staff at the Clinic Hietzing (KHI), Vienna, Austria

In the KHI, a comprehensive program to support staff members after stressful events in the sense of the "Second Victim" Phenomenon (SVP) was implemented in 2019. The pilot study aimed to conduct a descriptive study on SVP, compare the results of the study to similar previous studies and help develop targeted organizational strategies on how to manage the SVP in the future.

In a multi-stage process, a total of approximately 2,800 employees from all occupational groups were surveyed using the SeViD questionnaire. In a second step, ongoing training sessions were held in the form of short-term interventions. The expectations, knowledge and experiences of the participants regarding the Second Victim phenomenon were assessed before and after the training interventions.

A total of 966 people participated in the survey. When asked about their knowledge of the term "Second Victim", 50.6% of the participants stated they were familiar with it. Overall, 43% of the participants stated that they themselves were traumatized after an adverse event at least once. After the traumatizing adverse events, 62.4% of the participants received help, mainly from colleagues at KHI.

In line with the literature many employees were affected by the SVP, showing that it is a widespread problem. The symptoms described were highly relevant for health care workers and patient safety. The main requests were the possibility to access legal consultation as well as access to professional counseling and quick crisis intervention. Collegial support already plays a major role in dealing with Second Victim traumatization when compared to psychologic consultation or support from supervisors.

Therefore, the establishment of a peer support program, such as KoHi, is highly justified

Establishing Collegial Help at appears to be an appropriate and accepted measure to relieve employees mentally and could contribute to preventing dysfunctional processing mechanisms in the long term and, therefore, provide a valuable contribution to coping with the Second Victim phenomenon.



Photo: Vienna Healthcare Group / Votava

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