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Objective:

Upon completion of the lecture, attendees should be better prepared to:

- Recognize the value of a social reintegration program for burn survivors
- Describe tactics to assist burn survivors with social reintegration

Abstract:

Introduction: Burn injuries often affect survivors' psychosocial functioning, including relationships and social reintegration. Resuming activities they once enjoyed or going to public places because of mobility issues and/or altered appearances can be challenging. Many fear the possibility of encountering stares, glares, questions, whispers, rejection, and/or verbal assaults. In an effort to assist burn survivors to feel more empowered, practice social reintegration skills, and reduce isolation, we developed a program whereby survivors (and their guests) are invited to attend periodic parties and social outings throughout the year.

Methods: At one of our monthly support groups, toward the end of 2015, we discussed the concept of having annual parties and periodic social outings, which resulted in positive feedback and attendees brainstormed various ideas. Once the idea list was assimilated, we began implementing periodic social outings and parties in 2016.

Results: Thus far, we have conducted eight gatherings, with five being held at public venues and three in-house parties. The average number of attendance is 12.63, consisting of both survivors and guests with the smallest group consisting of 7 and the largest consisting of 20 (Table 1). Successes observed include repeat attendance by several survivors, attendees laughing and interacting with each other, expressing gratitude, giving hugs to each other, and providing positive feedback at each event. Following the events, attendees have routinely inquired about the date of the next outing and some survivors have independently gathered together to enjoy other social activities. Some of the challenges with this program include getting RSVPs; keeping the group size manageable (not too few, but not too many); managing group dynamics and ensuring no one is isolated within the group; providing transportation; and reaching more survivors.

Conclusion: In addition to support groups, implementing social events is beneficial and serves as a conduit for assisting with social reintegration skills and facilitating a sense of belongingness for burn survivors. There is often strength in numbers, and group events help to provide that sense of empowerment.

Disclosure:

Martha Feichter – No Relevant Financial Relationships to Disclose
Rajiv Sood – Speakers Bureau: Avita

Table 1		
Results by the Numbers		
Date	Event	Attendance
1/7/16	Duckpin Bowling	11
4/17/16	Game Night	13
12/15/16	Holiday Party	7
4/4/17	Dinner and Canal Walk	13
10/17/17	Escape Room	20
12/21/17	Holiday Party	17
1/25/18	Duckpin Bowling	11
4/18/18	Punch Bowl Social	9