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Healthcare clowns help patients laugh and recover – 17th December, 2020

Level 4

An adage says, "laughter is the best medicine". Humour is needed more than ever today. Medical staff around the world are using humour in their work. Healthcare clowns are now common in hospitals. An organisation started in 2011 that sets standards. It says: "Healthcare clowns bring moments of happiness...to children who are ill or who have special needs....Clowns also bring smiles to vulnerable adults, including seniors and people with dementia."

Israel is a world leader in the field. It opened the world's first university to offer a Bachelor's degree in medical clowning in 2007. An Israeli healthcare clown wanted to use her inner clown to help patients with COVID-19. She knew it would provide therapy for her patients. It reduces their stress and improves their wellbeing. She said: "Obviously, the doctors, they take care of the body. And we come in and take care of the soul. And it integrates together."

Level 5

An English adage says, "laughter is the best medicine". Today, humour is needed more than ever. Medical staff are understanding this and using humour in their care. Clown doctors and healthcare clowns are becoming common in hospitals around the globe. There is even a European organisation that sets standards. It was established in 2011. It says: "Healthcare clowns bring moments of happiness and distraction to children who are ill or who have special needs....Clowns also bring smiles to vulnerable adults, including seniors and people with dementia who are in hospital care."

Healthcare clowns are especially popular in Israel, which is a world leader in the field. The first university to offer a Bachelor's degree in medical clowning was in Israel, in 2007. A Jerusalem healthcare clown wanted to use her inner clown to help patients after a COVID-19 ward opened. She knew the clown inside her would have therapeutic benefits for her patients. It reduces their anxiety and improves their wellbeing. She said: "Obviously, the doctors, they take care of the body. And we come in and take care of the soul. And it integrates together - the doctors understand this."

Level 6

An English adage says, "laughter is the best medicine". In these troubling times, good humour is in need more than ever. Doctors and medical staff are taking heed of this and incorporating it into their care treatments. One product of this is the emergence of clown doctors and healthcare clowns in hospitals around the globe. There is even an organisation that sets standards. The European Federation of Healthcare Clowns Organisations was established in 2011. It says: "Healthcare clowns bring moments of happiness and distraction to children who are ill or who have special needs....Clowns also bring smiles to vulnerable adults, including seniors and people with dementia who are in hospital care."

Healthcare clowns are becoming especially popular in Israel, which is considered a world leader in the field. The first university ever to offer a Bachelor's degree in medical clowning was Haifa University, in 2007. One healthcare clown in Jerusalem, Leah Weiss, decided to divert her inner clown to help patients after a COVID-19 ward opened in March. She said she knew the clown in her would have therapeutic benefits for her patients. She wants to reduce their anxiety and improve their wellbeing. She enjoys working alongside doctors and said: "Obviously, the doctors, they take care of the body. And we come in and take care of the soul. And it integrates together - the doctors understand this."