FREE FROM HARM

Accelerating Patient Safety Improvement
Fifteen Years After *To Err Is Human*

Eight recommendations for achieving total systems safety from a report of an expert panel convened by the National Patient Safety Foundation

1. ENSURE THAT LEADERS ESTABLISH AND SUSTAIN A SAFETY CULTURE

Improving safety requires an organizational culture that enables and prioritizes safety. The importance of culture change needs to be brought to the forefront, rather than taking a backseat to other safety activities.
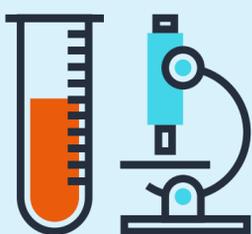
2. CREATE CENTRALIZED AND COORDINATED OVERSIGHT OF PATIENT SAFETY

Optimization of patient safety efforts requires the involvement, coordination, and oversight of national governing bodies and other safety organizations.

3. CREATE A COMMON SET OF SAFETY METRICS THAT REFLECT MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES

Measurement is foundational to advancing improvement. To advance safety, we need to establish standard metrics across the care continuum and create ways to identify and measure risks and hazards proactively.

4. INCREASE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH IN PATIENT SAFETY AND IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

To make substantial advances in patient safety, both safety science and implementation science should be advanced, to more completely understand safety hazards and the best ways to prevent them.

5. ADDRESS SAFETY ACROSS THE ENTIRE CARE CONTINUUM

Patients deserve safe care in and across every setting. Health care organizations need better tools, processes, and structures to deliver care safely and to evaluate the safety of care in various settings.

6. SUPPORT THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

Workforce safety, morale, and wellness are absolutely necessary to providing safe care. Nurses, physicians, medical assistants, pharmacists, technicians, and others need support to fulfill their highest potential as healers.

7. PARTNER WITH PATIENTS AND FAMILIES FOR THE SAFEST CARE

Patients and families need to be actively engaged at all levels of health care. At its core, patient engagement is about the free flow of information to and from the patient.

8. ENSURE THAT TECHNOLOGY IS SAFE AND OPTIMIZED TO IMPROVE PATIENT SAFETY

Optimizing the safety benefits and minimizing the unintended consequences of health IT is critical.