



**World Health
Organization**

Global Consultation

Setting Priorities for Global Patient Safety

26-28 September 2016, Florence, Italy

Organized by WHO headquarters, Geneva in collaboration with the Centre for Clinical Risk Management and Patient Safety, Department of Health of the Tuscany Region, and WHO Collaborating Centre for Human Factors and Communication for the Delivery of Safe and Quality Care, Italy

Concept Note

Issues and challenges

It is globally recognized that safety and quality are critical dimensions in the delivery of health care. Evidence shows that services that are unsafe and of low quality lead to diminished health outcomes and harm. Health services have seen an increased emphasis on patient safety and quality of care following the 1999 evaluation of health care related harm performed by the US Institute of Medicine (IOM). Strategies to improve patient safety at the individual, institutional, and health-system level provide entry points to designing high reliability health care provisions. Interventions have been developed and deployed by countries and organizations, but have been applied randomly, depending on the regulatory context and technical capacities of each setting. More resourced settings have taken proactive approaches in implementing this work, while low and medium income countries have considered patient safety something to address once key infrastructure issues are resolved. Still, in the UK, a pioneer in patient safety, recent estimations show that on average, one incident of patient harm is reported every 35 seconds,¹ while in the US, about 1.5 million patients are harmed and thousands killed every year due to unsafe medication.²

The evolving environment, including epidemiology, co-morbidities, and novel medical treatments and technologies, continues to intensify the demand for health care services. Weak safety and quality culture, flawed processes of care, and disinterested leadership teams further weaken the ability of health care systems and organizations to ensure access to meaningful health care.

Several progress reviews and the recent Patient Safety Global Action Summit³ hosted by the UK and German governments emphasized the global magnitude of the issue, the increasing gap between accumulated knowledge and implementation, and the importance of global recognition and action. Strategies based on accurate risk assessment and evaluation can support the design of high reliability health care provisions and improve patient safety by raising awareness and fostering contextual applicability, particularly in resource limited settings.

WHO Global Consultation

WHO is organizing a Global Consultation for “Setting Priorities for Global Patient Safety” in collaboration with the Centre for Clinical Risk Management and Patient Safety, Department of Health of the Tuscany Region, Florence, Italy. The event will take place on 26-28 September 2016 and will be hosted by the Centre for Clinical Risk Management and Patient Safety, a long-standing collaborator with WHO and recently designated the WHO Collaborating Centre for Human Factors and Communication for the Delivery of Safe and Quality Care. This high-level global event will bring together key international experts and senior policy makers from ministries of health from both developed and developing countries. A total of around 100 participants will be invited to the consultation, including representatives from key partner organizations.

Objectives of the Consultation

1. Share an overview of the WHO’s work and leadership on patient safety
2. Learn from experts and the approaches of successful healthcare organizations to implement safety tools and the right culture
3. Identify main challenges and barriers in improving patient safety for patients, health care providers and environment of care, particularly in LMIC
4. Discuss key priority issues, new directions and hot topics in patient safety
5. Identify priorities for future action by WHO and countries.

Expected outcomes of the Consultation

- Creation of a new thought leadership and direction on global patient safety
- Information exchange and shared best practices between meeting participants, enhancing awareness and further inter country/ inter institutional support and collaboration.
- Discussion of main challenges and barriers in improving patient safety, particularly in LMIC.
- Identification of key issues, new directions and priorities for global patient safety.

1. Patient safety is not a luxury, Editorial, Lancet vol 387, March 19, 2016
2. Bootman I et al, eds. Preventing medication errors: Quality Chasm Series, National Academic Press, 2006
3. Yu A, Flott K, Chainani N, Fontana G, Darzi A. Patient Safety 2030. London, 2016