Institute *for* Healthcare Improvement

# Workforce Safety

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# Why Workforce Safety Matters

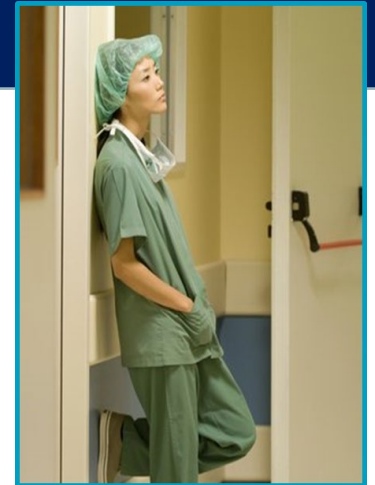Workforce safety is essential for safe, high-quality care and is preconditional to joy and meaning

Higher incidence of injuries than manufacturing or construction

Increasing rates of physical and psychological violence

Worsening wellbeing of the workforce

- Frontline healthcare personnel at greatest risk for exposure[1]
  - Surge in depression, anxiety, and insomnia, plus worsening of existing mental health issues

  - Attributed to limited resources, overwhelming workload, longer shifts, disruptions to sleep and work-life balance, process inefficiencies, occupational hazards, and concerns about health and financial instability

  - Illness and deaths[2]

1. Adams JG, Walls RM. Supporting the Health Care Workforce During the COVID-19 Global Epidemic. JAMA 2020;323(15):1439-1440
2. https://khn.org/news/lost-on-the-frontline-health-care-worker-death-toll-covid19-coronavirus/

# Barriers to Progress [1,2]

- Low awareness and visibility of the incidence and impact, including patient safety and financial ramifications

- Limitations of available and meaningful data

- Fear and disincentives for reporting safety issues

- Siloing of workforce safety

- Dearth of shared learning and improvement practices

!. McGaffigan PA, Daley Ullem E, Gandhi TK. Closing the Gap and Raising the Bar: Assessing Board Competency in Quality and Safety. The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety 2017; 43:267–2742.

2. McGaffigan PA, Gerwig K, Kingston MB. Workforce Safety Key to Patient Safety. Healthcare Executive Nov/Dec 2020

# *Safer Together: A National Action Plan to Advance Patient Safety*

- Illuminates the collective insights of 27 leading organizations that make up the National Steering Committee for Patient Safety, who are united in their efforts to achieve truly safer care and reduce harm to patients and those who care for them

- Provides clear direction for making significant advances toward safer care and reduced harm across the continuum of care
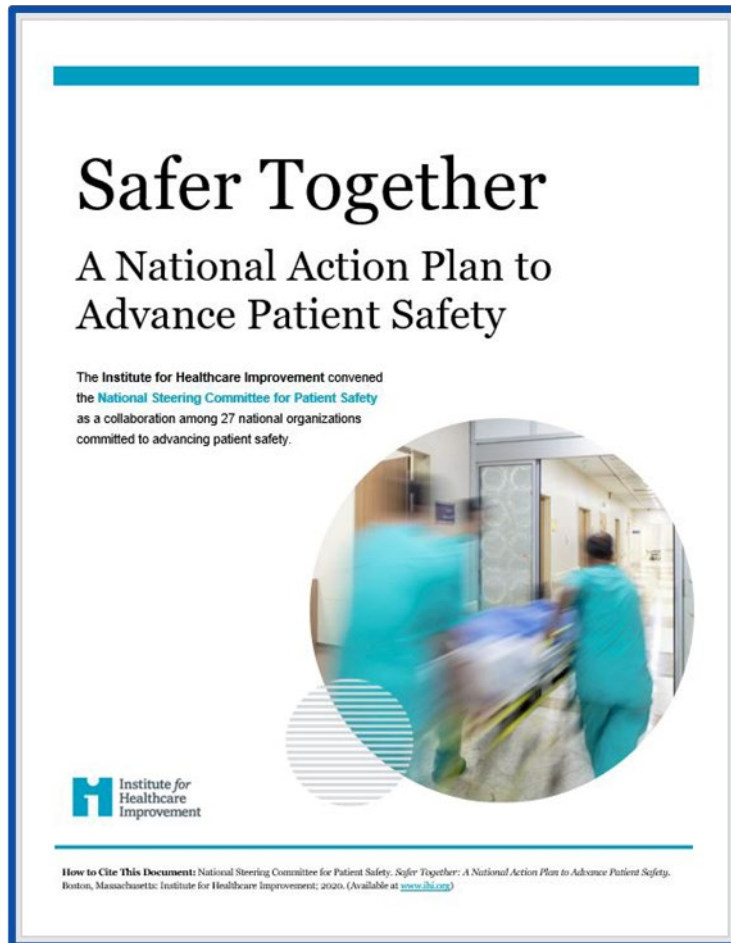
Culture, Leadership, and Governance — Learning System — Patient & Family Engagement — Workforce Safety
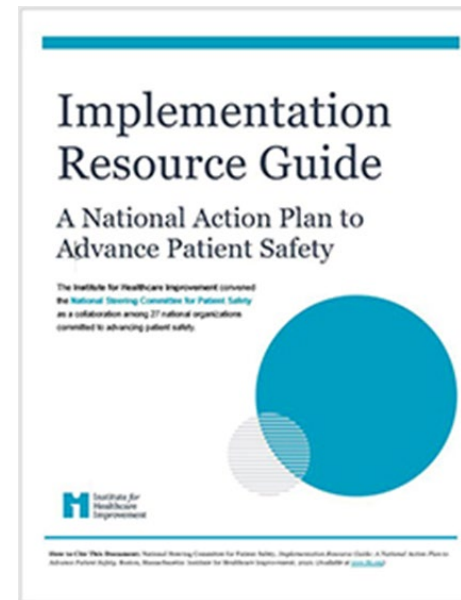
www.ihi.org/SafetyActionPlan

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**Aim:** Measurably and equitably improve safety for everyone in the workforce

Implement a systems approach to WFS

Assume accountability for physical and psychological safety and a healthy work environment that fosters joy

Develop, resource and execute on priority programs to equitably foster and promote WFS

# Develop, resource and execute on priority programs to equitably foster and promote WFS

- Tactic 12c. Adopt metrics and performance dashboards that are reflective of physical and psychological safety and joy in work (e.g., safety culture ratings, turnover and absentee rates, requests to reduce hours, likelihood to recommend organization, staff suicide rates)

- AHRQ Surveys on Patient Safety Culture™ (SOPS®) Workplace Safety Supplemental Items assess the extent to which the organizational culture in hospitals supports workplace safety for providers and staff.