



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the Program

The Department of Defense Patient Safety Program was mandated by the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act of 2001 in an effort to ensure the safe delivery of health care to 9.6 million TRICARE beneficiaries across the Military Health System.

- The DOD PSP fosters a culture of patient safety through promoting trust and transparency to empower everyone to deliver safe and reliable care to every patient we serve.
- The mission of the PSP program is to promote a culture of safety to eliminate preventable patient harm by engaging, educating and equipping patient care teams to institutionalize evidence-based safe practices. To accomplish this mission, we target health care leadership, health care professionals and beneficiaries, and outline their roles in patient safety practices.
- The DOD PSP guiding principles include:
 - Encouraging an evidence-based systems approach to create a safer patient environment
 - Engaging MHS leadership in the importance of patient safety and the establishment of an organizational culture that supports it
 - Fostering trust, transparency, teamwork, and communication
- Our dedication to patient safety is evident in all communications and through coordination and teamwork.
- Our comprehensive program provides products, services, educational opportunities and training resources.

Patient safety is a shared responsibility. All DOD leaders, health providers and patients are responsible for safe environments.

- The DOD PSP empowers all health care professionals to make a difference for their patients through leadership engagement, training, coaching and skill-building for team-based care, and risk identification and mitigation. Improving patient safety is a team activity – ineffective communication among frontline teams continues to be one of the leading causes of adverse events. Teamwork is critical to effective coordination, cooperation and synchronization of activities necessary to support patients' needs and aligns the care processes together across the continuum of care.
- All staff members play a role in collectively caring for the patient and the patient's needs. This includes the core, ancillary, support, coordinating and administrative teams. Patient and family members are also pivotal members of the multi-team system.

Patient safety is a universal issue. That's why we've partnered with national and federal agencies to participate in the national agenda to improve patient safety. The DOD Patient Safety Program aligns with the Military Health System Quadruple Aim, the Partnership for Patients and National Quality Forum Safe Practices.



- The DOD PSP aligns with the MHS and directly supports the Quadruple Aim; Experience of Care, Population Health, Per Capita Cost and Readiness. MHS leadership uses the Quadruple Aim to promote integrated, patient- and family-centered care, eliminate preventable harm, and advance the quality of care for military patients and their families, ultimately supporting overall military readiness.
- The DoD is serving as a vanguard partner for the Partnership for Patients initiative. The Partnership for Patients has two goals: 1) Decrease hospital readmission rates by 20 percent by the end of 2013 and 2) Decrease the rate of hospital-acquired conditions by 40 percent by the end of 2013.
- The PSP is also aligned with the NQF's Safe Practices (specifically Practices 1-4). These focus on: 1) Leadership structures and systems 2) Culture Measurement, Feedback, and Intervention 3) Teamwork Training and Skill Building and 4) Identification and Mitigation of Risks and Hazards.
- The DOD PSP continues to collaborate with several key federal agencies including the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, as well as non-governmental organizations to transform the military and national health care systems toward a culture of safety.

The DOD PSP is structured to encourage everyone to be a champion for patient safety, and is dedicated to several key functions:

1) Resources and Solutions

- Led by the Patient Safety Solutions Center
- Provides education, training, and best practices aimed at improving performance, advancing safety and quality in the experience of care, and eliminating preventable patient harm
- Leverages findings from the DOD Patient Safety Analysis Center to address leading causes of patient harm and identify opportunities to improve safety of care
- Maintains the Patient Safety Learning Center, a secure DKO-based community of interest that facilitates collaboration and the dissemination and sharing of knowledge and resources among DOD patient safety professionals
- Establishes and supports Team Resource Centers

2) Data and Analysis

- Managed by the Patient Safety Analysis Center
- Analyzes and reports patterns identified through patient safety event reports, sentinel event notifications, root cause analyses and failure modes analyses
- Shares information and collaborates with the VA to reduce patient safety-related errors
- Develops actionable information from which solutions and mitigations are formulated
- Provides mitigation consultative services

3) Education and Research

- Includes the Patient Safety & Quality Academic Collaborative, a joint effort with the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
- Advances patient safety through medical education and original research
- Fosters professional development of patient safety and quality leaders



Program Strengths

MHS leaders are dedicated to patient safety and to ensuring patient safety is a priority among all staff.

- MHS leadership uses the Quadruple Aim to promote integrated, patient- and family-centered care, eliminate preventable harm, and advance the quality of care for military patients and their families, ultimately supporting overall military readiness. The PSP aligns to the Quadruple Aim through:
 - Readiness: By training and collaborating with health care providers, we help medical facilities prepare to provide quality care to anyone, anytime.
 - Population Health: Safe patients who have trust in the system will use the services available to them early and often – maintaining health and preventing illness.
 - Positive Patient Experience: Providers who can communicate effectively with each other and with their patients can eliminate confusion and help patients understand their options, make wise decisions, and assist in care process.
 - Cost: Medical errors cost money. They increase medical litigation, increase patient stays, and increase the cost of care delivery.
- Active and involved leadership is a key factor for successfully evolving to a culture of patient safety. Strong leadership is crucial at all levels, from senior executives to the frontline leaders. This is true for all organizations. Leaders are the champions of change. They should set the expectations, hold the staff accountable for progress toward patient safety goals and model behaviors.

The DOD Patient Safety Program incorporates a grassroots approach for identifying and responding to Military Health System needs at the local level.

- Developing tools and resources to assist military treatment facilities in improvement is the primary strength of the DOD PSP. The program works with Service Representatives and MTF patient safety champions to determine needs and then develops resources and tools that assist MTFs in mitigating harm.
- In March 2010, nine sites (three Army facilities, three Navy facilities, three Air Force facilities) began pilot testing the Patient Safety Reporting System, a web-based application that standardizes event reporting across the MHS by allowing the MHS to capture, track and trend health care events. Facility staff will use the PSR to report both medication and non-medication related events with a single tool, allowing for a consolidated and streamlined event monitoring system. Full deployment of PSR was completed in FY11.
- Through local support and the PSR, the DOD PSP provides alerts, advisories and summaries with time-sensitive information related to patient safety issues to senior leadership and staff. These publications provide background, general information and recommendations for addressing patient safety issues. The DOD PSP also supplies focused reviews to inform health care providers of trends, reasons why and useful lessons learned from events reported in facilities. These reviews include the latest patient safety innovations and recommended solutions from medical journals and MTFs.

We offer health care providers opportunities for assessment, training, coaching and skill-building for team-based care.



- The DOD PSP offers individuals and teams, to include patient-care teams, opportunities for assessment, training, coaching and skill-building for team-based care. We have learned that 80 percent of training failures are associated with factors other than the training event. As a result, we are moving beyond pure training models to address those organizational factors that will lead to success. We understand that many MTFs see training as the foundation for the beginning of a patient safety initiative. As such, the DOD PSP offers a catalogue of opportunities and resources that encourage learning. These include course curriculum, toolkits, Learning Action Networks/webinars and podcasts.
- Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety, or **TeamSTEPPS®**, is an evidence-based teamwork system for improving patient safety through a comprehensive suite of ready-to-use materials, tools and training materials. TeamSTEPPS® targets health care teams and focuses on developing highly effective communication, coordination and other essential teamwork competencies. Through leadership support, diligent practice and ongoing training the teamwork system becomes part of the caregiving culture. We use medical simulation in most TeamSTEPPS Train the Trainer classes and the emphasis on this adjunct to classroom instruction is increasing. Simulation allows practice of the strategies and tools as a means to change strongly ingrained patterns of behavior in a low-threat environment.
- The DOD PSP has designated five regional Team Resource Centers/Centers of Excellence to conduct training, fundamental research and special projects on teamwork and patient safety. TRCs/COEs develop and validate team metrics and tools to include simulation, demonstration projects and applied research with a specific focus on translating research findings and theory into safer team processes and patient outcomes.
- The DOD PSP sponsors the Basic Patient Safety Manager's course. This 5-day course focuses on preparing the MTF Patient Safety Manager to assume that role. Course content looks at the Patient Safety Manager's Role 1) As the Patient Safety Expert, 2) As a Leader, 3) In Quality Management and Process Improvement and 4) In Identifying and Mitigating Risk.

We promote awareness around patient safety through virtual collaboration tools and other informational resources that foster collaboration and awareness around ways health care providers can improve patient safety.

- The DOD PSP uses several mechanisms to promote patient safety awareness throughout the MHS. The DOD PSP website is open to the public and offers information on PSP partners, upcoming events and PSP products and services. You can access the website at <http://health.mil/dodpatientsafety>. The Patient Safety Learning Center is designed to foster communication and awareness of lessons learned, best practices, tools and resources, news articles and community events. This site has restricted access. You may register for an account on the program website.
- DOD PSP sponsors other learning activities. These include instruction such as the Basic Patient Safety Manager's course, TeamSTEPPS and Patient Safety Reporting. Additionally, there are monthly interactive Learning Action Network/webinars. These are open to all MTFs and focus on a variety of patient safety topics and feature subject matter experts who share the latest evidence, lessons learned, leading practices and success stories from the DOD and civilian communities. DOD PSP publishes and disseminates a monthly eBulletin and Learning Update to share activities, topics of interest and PSP updates.



Opportunities for Continued Improvement

We are working to develop and implement systems and process improvement measures that limit errors.

- One of the most effective ways to prevent medical errors is to focus on overall system improvement. This begins with defining the patient safety vision and goals and then designing, implementing and evaluating programs to determine impact and sustainability. Some strategies and/or tools that may instill a culture of safety and continuous improvement are standardization of policies and procedures, checklists and technology.
- Reporting events helps identify trends and areas needing improvement. By taking a non-punitive and proactive approach, health care providers can cultivate an environment of trust and communication which will lead the way to safer patient care. The DOD PSP is helping MHS health care teams by supporting the implementation of the web-based PSR, which will allow individuals to anonymously report events more easily and accurately.
- In conjunction with programs like **TeamSTEPPS** and other safety training curriculum and materials, the DOD PSP is helping to instill a culture of enhanced communication to improve team skills and behaviors which will ultimately prevent medical errors.