



World Health Organization

Health care has evolved greatly over the past 20 years. Our knowledge of diseases and technological innovations have all contributed to improving life expectancy during the 20th Century. But one of the greatest challenges today is not about keeping up with the latest clinical procedures or the latest high-tech equipment. Instead, it is about delivering safer care in complex, pressurized and fast-moving environments. In such environments, things can often go wrong. Adverse events occur. Unintentional, but serious harm comes to patients during routine clinical practice, or as a result of a clinical decision.

Many countries in the world have already recognized that patient safety is important and are building ways and approaches to improve the quality and safety of care. They have also recognized the importance of educating health-care professionals on the principles and concepts of patient safety. Strengthening such competencies is needed in order to keep pace with the complexities of the system and the demands of workforce requirements.

The World Health Organization is currently leading a global drive to build on patient safety education, its principles and approaches that lead to a future health-care workforce educated to practise patient-centred care anywhere in the world. It has embarked on developing a patient safety curriculum guide with a multi-professional perspective, a health systems approach with a global reach. It has accelerated efforts in assisting universities and schools of health sciences to build and integrate patient safety learning into their existing curricula.

The World Health Organization, working with governments, universities and schools worldwide, international professional associations in the disciplines of dentistry, medicine, midwifery, nursing and pharmacy and their related student associations, have made patient safety education relevant to the needs and requirements of contemporary workforce environments. The combined energy, resources and expertise have been essential in developing the Multi-professional edition of the Patient Safety Curriculum Guide. The fruits of applying its recommendations will be immediate and measurable in terms of building the knowledge and skills of health sciences students that will better prepare them for safer practice.

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