



## Patients for Patient Safety News

October 2008



Welcome to the October edition of PFPS News! This edition brings news from a Patient Safety workshop held in Poland, the recent Pledge Ceremony for the World Alliance for Patient Safety, First Patient Safety Global Challenge, in Cameroon, along with news from Spain, the UK, Italy and more!

## CHAMPION ACTIVITIES around the world!



### News from Sri Lanka

- Christine Perera, Patients for Patient Safety Champion, Sri Lanka

In the August edition of PFPS News, we featured the experiences of those PFPS Champions that attended the Health Ergonomics and Patient Safety Conference in Strasbourg, and below Christine Perera, Champion from Sri Lanka, shares her experience from the event, and gives an update of other patient safety work she has been involved with in Sri Lanka.

The HEPS Conference took another turn in my life. There were two very important observations that I made at the conference that I would like to share. A patient champion commenced her presentation requesting the different professionals raise their hands when she called out - doctors, pharmacists, nurses and so on. It was very strange that when she called out for patients the only people who raised their hands were the patients' champions, although some of them might not be patients. I think the healthcare providers and patients are so divided that we do not seem to realise that we could all be patients some day. That all stakeholders need to work together to protect the health sector. The patients need to be active but not confrontational participants. The other important observation I made was that all the participants at the conference were female. This was commented upon at closing. Meeting the Champions from all over the world and hearing their stories made me realise I was not alone and how small my problem was. This has made me more determined and committed to carry on the work of the Alliance.

Back in Sri Lanka, the College of Community Physicians has established a Public Health Forum initiated by the WHO with the hope of spreading it throughout the Asian region. Although only members of the College are invited for the annual sessions, luck took me there and I was appointed to the committee. One of the key issues that will be taken up this year is Patient Safety. This is how we have managed to form a joint committee with the College of General Parishioners. We compromise. I hope this will spread on to the other associations and colleges. At the moment they are very hesitant to trust us.

We have also been creating education posters, and translating the cautionary notices in the BNF to Sinhala and Tamil. We have also had joint participation in seminars. The college has invited patients to participate in their annual sessions and we hope to raise the issue of responsibility of participants by ethical review boards once they have approved research projects. It appears that the boards feel that since there are very strict guidelines (patients being fully informed etc.) for research projects, that their responsibility is over. There is no monitoring done after the project is approved. Taking up issues such as policy and structural changes, patients' charter is also very important. These are our main aims. Although they so often seem to create confrontation and anger we pursue them in the hope of fruitful partnership.

To find out more you can contact Christine at: [christinesbp@slt.net.lk](mailto:christinesbp@slt.net.lk)

### What's inside?

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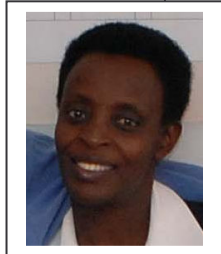


## Patient Champions attend Pledge Ceremony

The first Global Patient Safety Challenge, "Clean Care is Safer Care", a flagship programme of the World Alliance for Patient Safety, held a special ceremony on the fringes of the 58<sup>th</sup> WHO Session of the Regional Committee for Africa, to enable African Ministers to sign a pledge to make safer health care a reality for their population.

Since the launch of the Challenge in October 2005, this statement has been signed by Ministers of Health of 87 countries, representing about 80% of the world's population. The programme stimulates global commitment and action to reduce health-care-associated infections (HAI) worldwide. This Challenge has contributed to mobilizing countries, organizations and individuals to launch intensified action to make health care safer, and more particularly to achieve cleaner and safer care. According to the WHO, health care-associated infection is a global problem, with more than 1.4 million people suffering from it at any given time. It is estimated that in hospitals in developed countries, 5% to 10% of patients acquire one or more infections in health facilities - a figure believed to be between two and 20 times higher in developing countries.

Some 39 African health ministers have signed on to the campaign, by pledging to, among others, work to reduce health care-associated infections through actions such as acknowledging the importance of health care-associated infection; enhancing ongoing campaigns at national/sub-national levels to promote and improve hand hygiene among health care providers and making reliable information available on health care associated infection at community and district levels in order to foster appropriate actions.



Robinah Kaitirimba, a Patients for Patient Safety Champion and the national coordinator of the Ugandan National Health Consumers Organization, added that the plan would include a 'patients recruitment campaign' in the entire African region.

Robinah, was also one of the speakers at the ceremony and stated "With the signing of the pledge, it is now up to the civil society to hold the various governments to their commitments. But first, the civil society itself must be strengthened to enable it to carry out its duties effectively." She sited the current "limping support" for the civil society by donors as inadequate.

The other Patients for Patient safety champion at the ceremony, Cosmas Kalwambo of Zambia, corroborated Robinah's statement that the civil society is presently too weak to act effectively to hold governments to their commitments. However, he blamed the situation on lack of the necessary data to show the seriousness of the problems of health care-associated infections, especially in Africa. "There is very few data available in this area. Without a research data proving this is big problem, international donors won't see it as such, hence may not be inclined to supporting efforts by the civil society to help tackle the problem". He also expressed concern that patients were not empowered enough to challenge health care personnel who might be falling short of meeting safety procedures, saying that the current campaign was 'more tailored to health care personnel than patients'.



Source: [www.afriquenligne.fr](http://www.afriquenligne.fr) "Patient Safety: Civil Society to sensitize Patients"



## Partnership in action in England

### *Benita Playfoot, Patients Safety Manager, South Central*

NHS South Central Patient Safety and Risk Managers Forum Inaugural meeting took place on 22 August at the South Central Strategic Health Authority (SCSHA).

The Forum is facilitated by the Patient Safety action Team (PSAT) at SCSHA and chaired by Benita Playfoot, Patient Safety Manager (PSM). The Forum consists of staff from Trusts across the region working in Patient Safety, Clinical Governance, Quality, Risk and Clinical Effectiveness and front line clinical staff. Representatives from Acute, Primary care, Foundation, Mental Health and Learning disabilities Trusts were present despite the meeting being held on a Bank holiday Friday. Patient Safety Champions Anne Carvalho and Chista Kermani were among the 40 representatives that attended the Forum.

Gail Byrne Head of Department for Patient Safety, gave a presentation on the way forward for Patient Safety and the PSAT within the region. Gail also welcomed the Patient Safety Champions and encouraged their involvement in the Patient Safety Federation and the work of the Forum. Billy Hatifani, Infection Control PSM, updated the membership on MRSA and C. Difficile infection numbers and the outcomes from the DH (Department of Health) 'Observation of Care' visits. Berkshire NHS Trust gave a presentation on a serious untoward incident involving three other Trusts in the region and an industry contractor, which spurred a lively debate around the lessons learned. The Patient Safety Champions input was greatly appreciated and the sharing of best practice was appreciated by all. Benita gave an update from the DH meeting on future events and also feedback from the SHA Clinical quality/Patient Safety Leads meeting. The membership (see photo below) decided on the Terms of Reference and also on the frequency of the meeting, which will be held every quarter and for a full day. The members also produce the agenda for the next meeting and take notes. This is stored at SCSHA and distributed to the group prior to the next Forum meeting.

The Forum membership has devised their aims and objectives which include:

- To be a source of learning from each others organisations experiences.
- To share best practice and lessons learned from incident reporting investigation and regulation reviews.
- To produce unified policies, procedures and processes that can be translated throughout the trusts within NHS South Central.
- To ensure that Patient Safety and Quality are at the top of the Governance agenda.
- To raise the profile of the Patient Safety Champions and to ensure the patients view is incorporated into all of the patient safety agenda.

The Forum will be a place where all aspects associated with NPSA alerts, CAS alerts and also Patient Safety work streams from the Patient Safety Federation will be discussed and members will be updated on the developments, outcomes and necessary involvement.

### *Chista Kermani, Patients for Patient Safety Champion, England*

Anne Carvalho and I, the Patients for Patient Safety Champions for South Central, England were invited to the Inaugural South Central Patient Safety and Risk Management Forum, organised by Benita Playfoot, our Strategic Health Authority (SHA) link, and her colleagues. It was the first event we were invited to in our new roles, and we had considered how we would be received by the other attendees, who were Patient Safety Managers, Clinical Governance Lead Risk Managers and Directors for Clinical Standards within the region. Anne and I are both Claimant Clinical Negligence Lawyers, and so have significant experience of a broad range of medical accidents, but would our profession be a bar to how we would be perceived by the other attendees? It became apparent before long that our concerns were unfounded. We were warmly received; the attendees took a sensible approach, recognising that we were all present with a common goal, and that as Champions, Anne and I are offering our time and experience in the hope that we can assist with the greater aim of improving patient safety. Anne explained that we were already aware of the importance of patient confidentiality, having both worked in hospital medicine before becoming lawyers (Anne still works as a Midwife from time to time), and that anything discussed at meetings would be kept strictly within those boundaries.

Benita explained that the meeting had been suggested with the aim of the attendees deciding the frequency, length, and agenda for any future meetings. After a presentation and some group discussions, where the other attendees made a point of asking us our views and including us in their considerations, it was agreed that the meetings should be quarterly and the Champions were invited to attend all future meetings, which we were delighted about. At the end of the day, it was apparent that patients' safety and best interests were foremost in the minds of all those present, guiding their actions and judgments, and Anne and I are very much looking forward to participating in future events.





## Latex Free Ambulance Service in Madrid

- Adoracion Carpintero, Patients for Patient Safety Champion, Spain

The ambulance service in Madrid (Spain) (called "SUMMA 112") now has all its ICU vehicles (Intensive Care Units) free of latex. This is a reality in the inner lining as well as in the medical equipment (materials and devices). This is the only ICU service free of latex in Spain and it is an example of good practices in the safe care to all the latex allergic patients as well as in the prevention of new cases of latex allergy in health professionals, due to continuous use of latex materials in their job.

This achievement has been achieved because of the motivation and endeavour of the Staff and Head Office of "SUMMA 112" Service. In 2003, they accepted the challenge of creating the first latex-free ICU vehicle, in order to offer an urgent transport with safe care for all patients, and at the same time to allow the allergic health professionals to work in a setting free of latex. In this situation they could continue their job without health hazard and without risk of obtaining an early retirement or a permanent disability.

That is why the "SUMMA 112" Service asked my association (Allergic to latex Spanish Association) for its cooperation. This process was developed through several meetings in order to revise and check the equipment and determinate devices of the ICU vehicles were latex-free. On the other hand, a meeting for the health professionals of SUMMA 112 was held. In this meeting the Allergic to latex Spanish Association explained all the problems and questions about latex allergy.

Finally, the present "SUMMA 112" Head Office decided in July 2007 that all its ICU vehicles had to be made latex-free.

This achievement is a pride for the Allergic to latex Spanish Association, and it is an honour to collaborate with organizations such as "SUMMA 112" in which its managers are able to listen to the patients and their problems, are aware of their importance and decide to solve them.

## Patient Safety Activists meet in Poland

- Jolanta Bilinska, Patients for Patient Safety Champion, Poland

Between October 8 – 10, 2008 at the Center for public cooperation in Warsaw a meeting devoted to the introduction of principles for patients safety in health system in North – East countries in Europe was held.

I presented the role of non government organization in education and raising awareness by patients and by health authorities also. It was second step in the East East project, sponsored by the Batory Foundation.

I was so happy to be able to meet patient activists from Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Belgium. We discussed many issues related to improvement for patients: for example we want to introduce in the Medical University, special courses for nurses and clinicians about patient safety. We want to have procedures and rules which help patients and clinicians better understand all situations in the hospital. We agree about disadvantages which are common for our countries, for example the lack of epidemiology nurses, not enough hospital bed spaces and laboratory examinations during stays in the hospital. We also discussed counterfeit medicines in our region and new opportunities for patients living in EU countries.

All of us agreed that the priority is that Patient voices are heard by others parts of the health system. We want a Patient-Centered system of public services brought into law, not only in Poland but in the whole region. We need to be a part of the government, patients organizations, and representatives of the medical care. This project gives us power for changes not only in Poland but generally in the region.

To find out more about the East East project you can contact Jolanta at:  
[j.bilinska@nfz-lodz.pl](mailto:j.bilinska@nfz-lodz.pl)





**“TOGETHER WE CAN”, a Regional Meeting, Florence, Italy, September 19, 2008**  
- Silvana Simi, Patients for Patient Safety Champion, Italy

On September 19, 2008 the Tuscany Region organized a one day meeting to launch the new regional web site “we all are patients” ([www.salute.toscana.it/sst/grc/rischio-clinico](http://www.salute.toscana.it/sst/grc/rischio-clinico)). This meeting also gave the Healthcare Regional Authorities, the Patient Organizations representatives and citizens, the opportunity for a broad discussion on the patient/citizen role in all of the processes of healthcare and what can be done immediately. The motto was “together we can” .

The Assessore, Enrico Rossi stressed the importance to refer to “citizen” or to “person” rather than to “patient” as healthcare is a part, although fundamental, of a civil society. Riccardo Tartaglia, Director of the Risk Management and Patient Safety Centre, focussed on the importance of knowledge, stating that the new website will be a possible tool to inform people and a forum for discussion. Marco Menchini, Manager of Tuscany Region, talked about the initiatives already taken to improve safety and how people can be engaged in this challenge. Silvana Simi once again recalled the vision and the mission of PFPS action and the value of people-centred-healthcare, highlighting the potential for the patient/citizen to become a leading actor in health and autonomous partners in decision making, rather than passive recipients of authoritarian advices.

The subsequent discussion was very interesting and proactive, and we left both with the promise to meet again and the engagement, by the Regional Authorities, to run a first workshop on the most burning issues (patient role, patient safety, uncertainty of medicine, reporting systems, empowering actions) before the end of the year.

**3<sup>rd</sup> PAHO Regional Patients for Patient Safety Workshop**  
**Buenos Aires, October 13-15, 2008**

- Alexo Esperato, Quality of Health Services, PAHO



In recognition of the relationship between civil society participation in decision-making and health services improvement, the World Alliance for Patient Safety (WAPS/WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) are coordinating Patients for Patient Safety (PFPS) in the Americas. In our region, this work strand is endorsed by a resolution of PAHO/WHO focusing on patient safety and health care quality improvement, which exhorts member states and PAHO/WHO to promote “patient/client involvement in the formulation of policies and solutions to improve patient safety and quality of care<sup>1</sup>.” In order to accomplish this goal, PFPS relies on the work of Patient Champions, who articulate the patient perspective in the health sector agendas of their home countries.

In collaboration with PAHO/WHO and WAPS/WHO, Patient Champions from the Americas have contributed to patient safety improvement from the beginning of the PFPS project (May 2006). As an illustration, during this year Peru and Canada have constituted national patient networks, which are already collaborating with public institutions in the design and dissemination of national campaigns for healthcare quality and human rights. In Argentina interested citizens created a physician-patient network. In Mexico, a group of patients in Mexico is collaborating on patient safety research, while organizing a Mexican patient network. Finally, the patient network of the National Children’s Hospital of Costa Rica is training teenager patient leaders with chronic conditions, who will in turn train their peers in the self-management of disease.

The workshop will target patient leaders and health authorities and pursue the general objective of systematizing the integration of civil society in patient safety policy-making. It will also officially launch the Pan American Patient Network “Sylvia Ceballos,” after approval of the Strategic Framework and Governing Bodies.

It is hoped the workshop will provide attendees with the skills needed for the policy dialogue necessary for patient safety improvement.

A full report on the event will feature in the next edition of PFPS News.



## Other Patient Safety News

### 150 Million Reasons to Act -The European Patients' Forum launches the Patients' Manifesto in European Parliament

The European Patients' Forum is a membership organisation of patients across the European Union – it is a strong and united voice of patients in EU healthcare debates. The European Patients' Forum recently launched a Patients Manifesto in the European Parliament outlining vital new measures in three fundamental areas to improve quality of healthcare across the European Union. EPF calls for;

- **Equal and timely access** to safe, effective diagnosis, treatments and support ;
- **Better information and resources** for patients to be partners in determining their care;
- **A patients' voice** to be heard in Brussels and throughout the European Union.

The lead-up to the forthcoming European Parliamentary Elections and new Commission is a time to set new political priorities, and commit to take action. EPF President Anders Olauon said "Our current health systems can be unfair, divisive and fail to put the patients perspective first. We believe all patients within the EU have a basic right to equal access to quality medical treatment, regardless of where they live, their status or their income."

The Manifesto, developed by the EPF membership, who collectively represent over 150 million patients, citizens and voters 'call upon all the political groups within the European Parliament, MEPs, prospective MEPs, national representatives in EU Member States, and the new Commission, to commit to the legitimate rights and needs of patients and to make our proposals their priority'.

Dagmar Roth Behrendt, MEP who hosted the launch in the European Parliament welcomed the Manifesto "This Manifesto – from patients themselves - provides a road map for all of us committed to improving healthcare in Europe. I am especially pleased to see the Manifesto calls for a comprehensive strategy on "Information to Patients" in Europe and pro-active work on health literacy – this is a crucial driver behind patients' centred, quality healthcare.

## Forthcoming Events



### Risk and Patient Safety 2008

**Tuesday 25 November 2008 - Wednesday  
26 November  
Church House, London**

The conference offers an opportunity to learn from the many successful patient safety initiatives being implemented across the UK and internationally.

### 25th International Conference Bella Center, Denmark, 19 to 22 October, 2008

#### Healthcare Quality and Safety: Meeting the Next Challenges

ISQua, The International Society for Quality in Health Care, is a non-profit, independent organisation with members in over 70 countries. ISQua works to provide services to guide health professionals, providers, researchers, agencies, policy makers and consumers, to achieve excellence in healthcare delivery to all people, and to continuously improve the quality and safety of care.

**We really want to hear about all the important work PFPS Champions are participating in, so please don't forget to email Anna at [safetyadmin@patientsorganizations.org](mailto:safetyadmin@patientsorganizations.org) if you have any news you want to share or events you want to alert others to.**

**The next edition of PFPS News will be sent in December, so please send any contributions through before 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008.**