Safety Culture Development as a Core Leadership Responsibility

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“The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture“

Edgar Schein
Safety culture

» “...individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, and patterns of behavior that determine ... an organization‘s health and safety management” (Nieva & Sorra, 2003; ACNSI, 1993)

» “…emerges through a social process, where staff attach meaning to the policy and practice they experience and the behaviours they observe“ (Health Foundation, 2013)

» „the way we do things around here“ (Confederation of British Industry, 1991; Wakefield et al, 2010)

» „it‘s what you do when nobody‘s looking“ (Health Foundation, 2013)
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Hardt DiCuccio (2015)
Open questions

» Which interventions can help to improve safety culture?

» When can you expect positive impact on safety culture?
  • Timeline
  • Conditions / moderators

» Is safety culture the input or the output?

» Is the only way up?
Safety Culture Maturity Model (Parker et al., 2006)

Hierarchy of safety cultures according to the hearts and minds programme:

- Pathological: Who cares as long as we don't get caught.
- Reactive: Safety is important. We do a lot every time we have an accident.
- Calculatory: We have a system in place to manage all risks.
- Proactive: We work on the problems that we still find.
- Wholistic: Safety is how we do business around here.
PaSQ – European Union Network for Patient Safety & Quality of Care

Multidisciplinary approach to hip fracture

Adaptation of trigger-tool to a surgical service

The Advantages of Preventive Stoma Marking

Family-Centered Rounds in the Department of Surgery

Optimizing the blood use for transfusion based on the analysis of electronic medical records

A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Treatment of Pressure Ulcers

Analysis of critical incidents in surgery

Antibiotic prophylaxis implementation at G. Pini Hospital, Milano

Improving patient safety by patient surveys - prevention of Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Safety in the operating room. The adoption of the preoperative and surgical checklist

Microbiological diagnosis of prosthetic joint and fracture-fixation device infections in orthopedic surgery

From pathway to breast cancer unit

Staff training on Non-Technical Skills (NTS) and team activities observation with OTAS methodology

The microbiological diagnosis of prosthetic joint and fracture-fixation device infections

Clinical audit on medication recognition

Using a checklist for ambulatory surgery

Effectiveness of tranexamic acid (TXA) in reducing postoperative bleeding and transfusion risk in first knee replacement

Tracer as a tool to assess quality of care
Safety Culture Development

Enabling
- Enabling Policies and practices that motivate the pursuit of safety

Enacting
- Enacting Frontline actions that improve patient safety
  - Frontline interpretations of safety-related leader actions and organizational practices
  - Shared assumptions, values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior regarding safety that become embedded over time

Elaborating
- Elaborating Learning practices that reinforce safe behaviors

Fewer hospital errors

Adapted from Singer & Vogus (2013) and Vogus et al. (2010)
Developing safety culture

» Understanding the mechanisms behind culture change informs strategies
  a) for sustainable implementation of systemic interventions,
  b) for involving leaders and frontline staff and
  c) for evaluating their effects as part of a larger change process

» Leadership
  • Developing safety culture is a leadership responsibility
  • Requires commitment of all leadership levels

» Even without strategic culture management approach
culture evolves continuously
– but not necessarily the way you want it to!