

The Canadian Patient Safety Institute policy framework – moving ideas into action

Canadian patient safety is a public health crisis:

Patient safety incidents are the **third leading cause of death** after cancer and heart disease in Canada.

Almost 28,000 Canadians died from patient safety incidents in 2013.

Every one minute and eight seconds, a patient experiences harm in the Canadian healthcare system.

Every 13 minutes, someone dies from a preventable patient safety incident.

Why a Policy Framework?

CPSI acts as a catalyst, integrator and champion of patient safety in Canada.

But improving patient safety requires a shift in our collective cultures, values and expectations at every level of our complex system – a system which has often-competing priorities and varying resources, access and needs.

So how do we do that? With the help of *Strengthening Commitment for Improvement Together: A Policy Framework for Patient Safety*.

This framework is intended to serve as a road map to improve patient safety by stimulating action on these key policy levers:

- ➔ Legislation
- ➔ Regulation
- ➔ Standards
- ➔ Organizational Policies
- ➔ Public Engagement

How we created the framework

CPSI took a qualitative approach to identify policy levers, outline guiding principles, and determine measures of success. We conducted a literature review of academic and other sources.

Our Policy, Legal and Regulatory Affairs Advisory Committee – leaders and experts from medicine, nursing, regulatory bodies, governments and non-government organizations, and patient partners – informed its development, and offered feedback and guidance throughout.

What's included in the framework

The framework is organized from aim to action, making it an easy-to-follow guide:

- Policy Aim: Safest Care in the World
- Policy Actions
- Policy Context
- Guiding Principles for Patient Safety
- Policy Levers for Patient Safety
- Measures of Success
- Knowledge to Action

Guiding Principles

The framework was built around several guiding principles that are intended to stimulate conversation and inspire action.

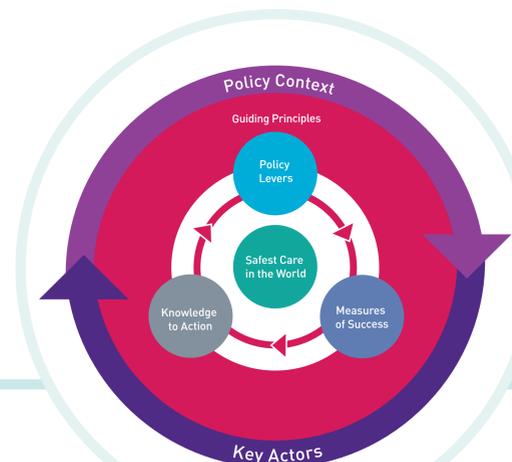
This is what Canadian healthcare must achieve.

- Patient care is as safe as possible across the country and efforts are made to prevent, respond to and learn from a patient safety incident
- Mechanisms for measuring and monitoring safety are integral for improvement
- Patients and families are actively engaged and empowered.
- Supportive and engaged leadership promotes a culture of safety
- A caring and just culture is established at all levels of Canadian healthcare
- The health workforce is engaged and supported.

Measures of Success

How will we know if the framework is working? We've identified some key measures of success, including:

- Provinces and territories advance patient safety through legislation that ensures transparency in the reporting and disclosure of patient safety incidents.
- Canada-wide monitoring systems consistently measure and report on safety, as well as the rates and scale of harm, using shared definitions.
- Professional associations and regulatory bodies include patient safety into their professional standards of practice and professional development tools and strategies.
- All professional licensing requirements include patient safety practice standards.
- Organizational practices promote and enforce patient safety, incorporating health standards across Canada and measured through accreditation.
- Healthcare organizations support an open safety culture, enable transparency and reporting, and involve patients and families at every level.
- Patient safety awareness increases among Canadians.
- Patient safety is a priority across health systems in Canada.



Knowledge to Action Next Steps

Now that a policy framework exists, it's time to take action.

Canada must:

- Create policies that support patient safety at every level.
- Incorporate patient safety competencies and adhere to accreditation standards that incentivize safe care.
- Improve public awareness of patient safety and include patients and families in decision-making.
- Evaluate the policy levers within the Canadian political and social context – including the limitations created by short term political decision-making.
- Recognize challenges across sociocultural populations, socioeconomic status and geographical locations to ensure all people in Canada receive safe care.

Canadians deserve to have the safest healthcare in the world.

The CPSI policy framework can help make that goal a reality.

Acknowledgements

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