

Side-Event to the Global Ministerial Patient Safety Summit 2023

Hosted by the Swiss Patient Safety Foundation (SPS) and European Patient Safety Foundation (EUPSF)

patientensicherheit schweiz
sécurité des patients suisse
sicurezza dei pazienti svizzera

EUROPEAN
PATIENT
SAFETY
FOUNDATION



Patient Safety

5th Global Ministerial Summit 2023
23rd - 24th February 2023, Montreux, Switzerland

 **THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2023, 18.15 - 19.15**
2M2C MUSIC & CONVENTION CENTRE, MONTREUX

HOW TO ACHIEVE REAL PROGRESS IN PATIENT SAFETY AT NATIONAL LEVEL

DISCUSSION BOARD SUMMARIES

The Swiss Patient Safety Foundation (SPS) and European Patient Safety Foundation (EUPSF) hosted an exclusive Side-Event at the 5th Global Ministerial Patient Safety Summit 2023 in Montreux, Switzerland. In a World Café Workshop, 42 international experts came together to share national experiences and knowledge on the topics of Just Culture, Critical-Incident-Reporting Systems as well as National Patient Safety Programs. The key messages from these discussions are summarized below.

Just Culture

Just Culture is an upcoming and controversial topic of debate: being deemed as vital by some and as a "Black Spot" by others. Discussions revealed that the maturity level varies greatly from country to country and even from institution to institution within the same nation. Despite of existing policies and guidelines, the international experts underlined the need for effective and sustainable implementation strategies as well as a consistent and systematic conceptualization of the term "Just Culture". Particularly organizational hierarchical structures / thinking, fear of reporting due to legal prosecutions and fear of reprisals by the employer, or negative judgements by colleagues have been called out for inhibiting culture changes. To promote and live a successful Just Culture, national frameworks and legal modifications to protect employees are needed for health care organizations, professionals, and patients, which additionally support educational programs. Also, reporting-systems, leadership efforts, second-victim support, as well as structural organizational components (e.g., size of organizations) are vital factors to consider when developing and implementing a Just Culture.

Critical-Incident-Reporting Systems

Either you love it, or you hate it! While some countries consider Critical-Incident-Reporting Systems (CIRS) as the ultimate method for patient safety, others show great resistance towards such systems. This resistance can be attributed to numerous reasons, such as doubts in confidentiality, issues of trust in the systems-management (e.g., government involvement), fear of legal consequences, and quality of data. Yet, despite these barriers, one must keep the initial goal of CIRS in mind, namely the publicizing of extraordinary cases in the sense of storytelling to enhance professional competence through experience. Experts encourage the expansion of this enhancement potential: For one, CIRS should strive to become learning systems, and secondly, be adapted and implemented for primary care and patient-engagement purposes (e.g., CIRS for patients). To foster culture changes, experts recommend the uptake of not only negative incidences, but also positive incidences and risk-taking; in practice, the realization of such a comprehensive system is, however, challenging. In essence, a bottom-up approach is vital for CIRS to be successful: Allow professional autonomy and foster staff awareness as well as training regarding reporting-systems and behaviors.

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National Patient Safety Programs

The exchange between experts underlines the vast difference between countries regarding national programs on patient safety. While some countries see patient safety as the fundamental basis of the health care system, reflected in national programs and supported by strong legislation in place, others solemnly rely on quality strategies, campaigns, accreditation systems and inspections. In all cases, regular meetings and personal interaction between the national or regional coordinating body and care providers at regional and local levels are essential for the successful implementation of national action plans or strategies. Funding differences are also apparent: some experts talked about having funding but no action plan, while others have expertise but no funding. Information on national programs is not readily available in all countries; some publish reports and data online, however, not always in fully transparent manner. The information available is mainly relevant for the experts and healthcare professionals and not for the general public. To learn about national programs in other countries and accelerate the exchange of best practices, having a good network of involved experts appears to be essential.