

Partners in Patient Safety

Hugh Macleod and Wendy Nicklin

Patient safety in healthcare is, fortunately, not an isolated quest. As seen in the array of contributors in this edition of *Healthcare Quarterly*, *Patient Safety Papers* (the sixth in the series), there are many valuable players in this arena. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) and Accreditation Canada have come together to co-sponsor this edition since the sharing of knowledge and expertise is so crucial to success in the patient safety forum.

It is critical to acknowledge the role that partnerships of many national and jurisdictional organizations play in this quest for a safer healthcare system. The Institute for Safe Medication Practices, the Canadian Institute for Health Information, provincial health quality councils, the Health Council of Canada and others are dedicated to helping organizations and peers improve the safety of healthcare. Such partnerships foster a coordinated effort that minimizes duplication and promotes the very best in safety.

Within the realm of patient safety, Accreditation Canada sets the standards for quality healthcare, inclusive of the required organizational practices (ROPs). CPSI leverages research expertise and provides tools that allow healthcare organizations to meet some of those ROPs.

Accreditation Canada and CPSI play complementary roles. With quality healthcare come improved efficiency and better patient outcomes. Through the integration of accreditation within the organization's quality improvement program, Accreditation Canada continues to play a role in enabling high-quality care and in ensuring that the patient safety focus is clearly fundamental to achieving this high-quality care. CPSI views accreditation as integral to a safer healthcare system. It develops and uses evidence-based procedures and products to help organizations put into place the necessary tools to enable safety.

In 2011, Accreditation Canada completed a comprehensive evaluation of its Qmentum accreditation program. Through the insights gained, Accreditation Canada has provided evidence proving that patient safety and quality healthcare are inextricably linked. In addition, an organization with a strong governing board achieved higher performance by incorporating the ROPs and the Patient Safety Culture Tool. With that in mind, Accreditation Canada recently developed the Patient Safety Strategy Phase Three, which builds on the work done in phases one and two. It also continues to strengthen the role of

the accrediting process, as integrated with quality improvement programs, and is a catalyst for ensuring that patient safety strategies are incorporated into daily practices.

Through collaborative relationships, such as that between Accreditation Canada and CPSI, the implementation of key initiatives is enhanced, ensuring that client organizations and patients see results sooner rather than later.

Accreditation Canada's 2011 Report on Required Organizational Practices (2011) revealed that the ROPs achieving the highest national compliance rates were related to infection prevention and control, suicide prevention, medication safety and communication at transfer points – all of which are areas where CPSI has focused its efforts in the recent past. The accreditation

process and the resultant data provide invaluable insights that can help inform changes, not only for Accreditation Canada but also across healthcare. For CPSI, the accreditation process offers insight regarding where to expand products and services and where to focus research efforts.

Accreditation Canada and CPSI are proud to co-sponsor this important publication focusing on patient safety. We hope that the readers benefit in a marked way from the quality of the articles contained herein. **HQ**

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Reference

Accreditation Canada. 2011. *How Safe Are Canadian Health Organizations? 2011 Report on Required Organizational Practices*. Ottawa, ON: Author. Retrieved February 27, 2012. <http://www.accreditation.ca/uploadedFiles/News_and_Publications/Publications/Report_on_ROMs/2011-Report-on-ROMs.pdf>.

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