

Patient Safety vs. Quality Cheat Sheet

“No patient will be harmed from anesthesia.”

-Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation Mission Statement

Quality care is “doing the right thing, at the right time, for the right person, and having the best possible result”

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

The Six Aspects of Quality Care (Institute of Medicine):

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|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Safe | Avoiding injury from care that is meant to be helpful |
| 2. Effective | Providing care in line with best available evidence. Avoiding under- or overuse of services. |
| 3. Patient-centered | Providing respectful, responsive, individualized care |
| 4. Timely | Reducing waits and harmful delays for both those who give and receive care |
| 5. Efficient | Avoiding waste of equipment, supplies, ideas, and energy |
| 6. Equitable | Providing equal care regardless of personal characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, SES, geographic location) |

Take-away: Patient safety is *one aspect* of quality care. Therefore, patient safety initiatives are just one type of quality improvement project.

Comparing Quality Improvement Project Types

Similarities across the six aspects of quality:

- Use similar improvement methods and tools
- Focus on identifying and addressing system issues that may be contributing to sub-optimal care.
 - Try to eliminate finger-pointing and blaming individuals
 - Remove and prevent workarounds that fix problems temporarily

Differences across the six aspects of quality:

- Have different objectives
 - Safety projects address the first domain of quality care. They aim to eliminate, prevent, reduce, or mitigate injury and harm.
 - Other quality projects may aim to increase the use of and adherence to evidence-based practices, improving efficiency, equity, timeliness, or patient-centeredness of care
- Focus on different outcomes
 - Safety projects outcomes include:

- Infection reduction
- Fall injury reduction
- Reduced rate or severity of medication error
- Increased reporting of near misses
- Other quality projects outcomes include:
 - Guideline adherence (effectiveness)
 - Waste reduction (efficiency)
 - Improving the care experience (patient-centeredness)
 - Improving care access (equity)
 - Reducing time from order to delivery (timeliness)

Summary of the Comparison of Safety Projects to Other Quality Improvement Projects

	Patient Safety Projects	Other Quality Projects
Aims & Objectives	Eliminate, prevent, reduce, or mitigate injury and harm.	Increase adherence to evidence-based best practices or improve efficiency, equity, timelines, or patient-centeredness of care
Outcomes	Infection reduction Fall injury prevention Less medication error rate or severity Increase reporting of near misses	Guideline adherence (effectiveness) Waste reduction (efficiency) Better experience (patient-centered) Improved care access (equity) Reduce decision to delivery (timely)

Take-away: Patient safety projects differ from other types of quality improvement work only in the aims and types of outcomes they pursue. All quality work focuses on the system issues that contribute to the problem under investigation. Similar methods and tools are used across all quality improvement initiatives.

What’s in it for YOU?

Why should you care about and take an active role in patient safety and quality improvement?

- Satisfy a graduation requirement
- Gain research experience
- Explore a potential career path and hone your expertise
- Achieve recognition for impactful work
- Develop a better understanding of and appreciation for patient safety and quality work
- *The satisfaction of knowing you’re doing the best for your patients*