



## Information Note 2

# Implementation of the WHO Patient Safety Curriculum Guide: Multi-professional Edition

The Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide is a comprehensive guide for patient safety education in the fields of dentistry, medicine, midwifery, nursing and pharmacy. The Curriculum Guide lays the foundations for capacity-building in essential patient safety principles and concepts.

### Why the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide is needed

Patient safety is becoming more widely recognized in health-care facilities worldwide. However, many health-care professionals still do not adequately practise it. Furthermore, it is not widely taught to students of health care. The overall aim of the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide is to help the health-care professionals and leaders of the future to practise patient safety and so help create a culture of safety for all patients.

### How to use the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide

The Curriculum Guide provides educators with the resources for teaching health-care students about patient safety. It identifies the priority topics to be taught, how these may be taught and how the different topics can be accessed in the curriculum and the training slides. Case studies from each of the health-care professions have been included to demonstrate the practical aspects of teaching each topic.

### How to review and assess capacity to integrate patient safety topics into existing curricula

To start the process of introducing or renewing a patient safety curriculum, it is proposed to:

- identify what is already being taught;
- identify and engage with educators who have an interest in teaching patient safety through surveying or holding seminars on patient safety;
- identify where patient safety could fit into existing curricula;
- identify which aspects of patient safety will need introducing from the beginning;
- introduce the Curriculum Guide gradually, one or two topics at a time.

### How to integrate patient safety into existing curricula

Patient safety is broad and there are many opportunities for incorporating patient safety education into existing curricula.

- When introducing patient safety topics, cover knowledge and performance requirements together (given at the start of each of the topics).
- Any clinical discipline can potentially house patient safety.

- As a general rule, deliver and assess the topics in the same manner as your curriculum is currently delivered. For example, if your curriculum is heavily lecture-based, develop lectures, if problem-based learning is preferred, then develop sessions in this manner.
- If less traditional teaching styles (e.g. smaller group sessions, or case-based studies) are being used or developed, then patient safety is ideal for this approach.
- Enhance existing parts of curricula by integrating patient safety into it, rather than treating it as a separate subject.

### **How should the topics be taught, and how much time should be dedicated to them**

The Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide aims that patient safety becomes an integral part of the health-care culture. As such, the best teachings often come from the educators themselves, role-modelling good practices in clinical settings. Some useful points include:

- spreading the teachings of the Curriculum Guide throughout the course for maximum effect and information retention;
- if teaching each topic separately as a didactic lecture, there is sufficient material for a 60-90 minute presentation around each topic;
- some topics are particularly well suited to teaching in smaller groups (e.g. Topic 5: learning from errors to prevent harm, Topic 7: using quality-improvement methods to improve care);
- if choosing to teach in smaller groups, then aim for between 90 minutes to half a day per session;
- during the course it is best to deliver different parts of the curriculum. For example:
  - at the start of clinical training, focus on clinical issues: infection control (Topic 9), medication safety (Topic 11) and communication methods (Topic 8). Using clinically relevant, case-based examples would improve training;
  - once students are aware of some of the complexities of health care, teaching can begin on the more theoretical concepts, such as complex systems (Topic 3), risk management (topic 6), learning from errors (Topic 5) and quality-improvement methods (Topic 7);
- consider where different parts of the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide can be introduced in your existing curriculum.

### **How to assess its uptake**

It is important to assess how the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide is being received and how well students are learning from its content. It is proposed that:

- methods for feedback from both educators and students are designed, for example, feedback forms (for students), discussion groups (for educators); assess what is working and what isn't working so well, and incorporate new ideas;
- patient safety aspects are included in students' exams, both as a sub-section of questions on other topics and as questions of their own accord; some example assessment questions can be seen in Annex 2 of the Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide.

### **Adaptation**

The Multi-professional Patient Safety Curriculum Guide has been designed to be incorporated into a wide range of disciplines and teaching styles. It should be adapted for local use. It is hoped that it will complement the existing curricula and will engender a culture of patient safety practices for the health-care professionals of the future.

**Link:** <http://www.who.int/patientsafety/education/curriculum/en/index.html>