



## Management Support for Patient Safety: Tailored Approaches for Iran's Health System

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### Dear Editor

Hospitals are the most complex human organizations ever created (1). Delivering healthcare services in these environments exposes them to the risk of medical errors and adverse events, which can jeopardize patient safety. One critical factor influencing patient safety is the patient safety culture, which comprises several dimensions. A key dimension of this culture is management support for patient safety (2). Health system managers bear a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure high-quality care while fostering continuous improvements in patient safety practices (3).

Despite some progress within Iran's health system, management support for patient safety has been reported as inadequate in certain cases (4, 5). This article introduces practical, context-specific management support actions that aim to enhance patient safety culture, tailored to the unique structure and conditions of Iran's health system.

While some practices aimed at improving patient safety have been implemented in hospitals worldwide, the current paper focuses on adapting these practices to the Iranian healthcare context. Iran's health system faces distinctive challenges, such as varied managerial educational backgrounds, infrastructure limitations, and cultural considerations that differ from those in more developed health systems. This article presents practical actions that address these challenges, emphasizing continuous education, non-punitive error reporting, and the creation of an ongoing culture of safety despite resource constraints.

To avoid perpetuating the same ineffective cycles, the following steps are recommended to improve managerial support for patient safety at all levels of the Iranian health system:

**1. Thorough Assessment of the Current Safety Culture:** While previous studies have investigated the state of patient safety culture in Iranian

healthcare centers, continuous evaluation is necessary. New research studies should inform macro-level policy changes aimed at enhancing patient safety in the Iranian context.

## 2. Independent Evaluation of Management Support:

In healthcare centers where management support for patient safety is lacking, independent researchers should conduct detailed analyses. Possible conflicts of interest should be avoided to ensure an unbiased understanding of the issues.

**3. Tailored Training Programs:** Given the diverse educational backgrounds of health system managers, it is essential to implement specialized training programs that address the concepts of patient safety culture. These programs should focus on the role of management in fostering a positive safety culture.

**4. Non-Punitive Error Reporting Systems:** Creating a supportive infrastructure where healthcare workers can report medical errors immediately and honestly without fear of punitive actions is critical. Measures should focus on reducing harm to patients, and the introduction of anonymous error reporting systems—potentially through mobile applications—can enhance transparency.

**5. Analyzing and Addressing Frequent Errors:** Regularly collecting and analyzing data on medical errors will allow managers to identify recurring issues and develop operational solutions to prevent them. This approach emphasizes actionable insights rather than assigning blame.

**6. Dissemination of Lessons Learned:** Patient safety committees should use data on medical errors to inform all healthcare providers. By sharing de-identified error cases in training sessions, healthcare workers can learn from mistakes without the fear of reprisal, contributing to ongoing education.

**7. Technology-Driven Solutions:** Utilizing multimedia platforms and mobile applications for reporting and training can increase the appeal and effectiveness of patient safety initiatives. These tools could provide real-time feedback and insights, promoting active participation from all levels of staff.

**8. Building a Sustainable Safety Culture:** These actions should be repeated continuously to embed management support for patient safety into the organizational culture of healthcare providers. This culture must persist even in the

face of leadership changes, ensuring long-term commitment to patient safety.

(It is important to note that while many of the steps discussed in this article may already exist in the literature individually, this paper brings them together with a specific focus on addressing the unique needs of Iran's health system.)

This article introduces practical, context-specific actions to foster a healthy cycle of medical error prevention, focusing on the crucial role of management support in promoting patients' safety culture. The proposed steps are informed by academic research, clinical experience, and a review of best practices, emphasizing adaptation of these strategies to Iran's health system. Future research should explore how management can better influence the patient safety culture and investigate the factors that contribute to the development of patient safety-oriented leadership across various healthcare settings. Expanding these inquiries through qualitative, quantitative, and interventional studies will provide valuable insights for continuous improvement in this critical field.

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There are no ethical considerations to be considered in this research.

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## Authors' Contribution

All authors equally contributed to preparing this letter.

## Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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