

## Full Version 13. Know Some Patient Safety Definitions



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*Learn what some patient safety terms mean. This can help you become more involved in your healthcare decisions.*

### **Critical Incident (CI)**

This is an unplanned and undesired event that occurs when a patient receives health services. It results in serious harm to the patient (injury, disability, death). It is not related to the patient's main health condition. An example is an operation on the wrong side of the body.

### **Culture of Safety**

It is the attitudes, values, beliefs, views and actions that guide how healthcare providers in a setting behave toward safety in their places of work. Groups with a positive safety culture talk openly and honestly. They show mutual respect and trust among staff, patients and families. They believe in safety at all levels in the workplace. Patients are actively involved in their healthcare decisions.

### **Disclosure**

This is the process of telling patients and families about harmful incidents. This includes the facts about a critical incident.

### **Health Literacy**

The patient's ability to find, understand, evaluate and communicate healthcare information to make decisions about their healthcare.

### **Healthcare Provider**

A healthcare provider is a person who gives healthcare to patients (doctors, nurses, pharmacists).

### **Informed Consent**

This is the process in which the patient is given enough of the facts to make a decision to either accept or refuse healthcare treatment.

### **Medication Reconciliation**

This is the process where a patient's complete list of medicines they take, is identified and used by a healthcare provider to prescribe medicines that will not cause harm to the patient.

### **No Harm Incident**

This is an incident that did reach the patient but did not result in harm.

### **Patient Advocate**

A patient advocate is someone you trust to help you through the healthcare process.

A patient advocate can be a spouse, adult child, brother/sister, or a willing friend. This person speaks up on behalf of the patient.

### **Patient and Family Centred Care**

Patient and family centred care means that patients, families and their advocates are partners in the care process. Providers share information openly with the patient and family. Patients are listened to and their needs and expectations are respected. Patients are involved in their own healthcare decisions.

### **Patient Safety**

Patient safety includes actions taken and practices followed by healthcare providers and organizations, and the public to prevent harm to patients resulting from healthcare services. It aims at the best possible outcomes for the patient.

### **Personal Health Information (PHI)**

Personal health information includes a patient's name, address, Personal Health Identification Number, information about the patient's health, healthcare history, family history, current healthcare and healthcare payments.

### **Specialist Referrals**

A healthcare provider refers the patient to a doctor with special expertise or seeks answers about the patient's care and treatment from a doctor with special expertise in a specific area. (A patient with heart disease may see a cardiologist/heart doctor.)

### **Patient Representative**

A person assigned in a healthcare setting who helps patients and families with their specific health concerns and answers their questions while in a healthcare facility. This person is the link between patients, families and healthcare staff.

## Resources

- World Health Organization. International Classification for Patient Safety (ICPS). <http://www.who.int/patientsafety/implementation/taxonomy/en/index.html>
- *Canadian Disclosure Guidelines*. Disclosure Working Group. Edmonton, AB: Canadian Patient Safety Institute; 2008. [www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/English/toolsResources/disclosure/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/English/toolsResources/disclosure/Pages/default.aspx)
- *The Canadian Patient Safety Dictionary*. Jan M. Davies, Philip Hébert and Carolyn Hoffman. Ottawa, ON: Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada; 2003. [http://rcpsc.medical.org/publications/PatientSafetyDictionary\\_e.pdf](http://rcpsc.medical.org/publications/PatientSafetyDictionary_e.pdf)

**Learn...to be SAFE.** Go to the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety websites: [www.safetoask.ca](http://www.safetoask.ca) and [www.mips.ca](http://www.mips.ca).