



International Society for  
Quality in Health Care

# Leadership in Quality and Safety

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CAHO-ISQUA INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR SERIES

SEPTEMBER 2022

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# Highlights

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‘The perfect storm’

The challenges placed on healthcare leaders

Effective leadership

The current state of risk and safety impacting quality of care

Culture

Leadership style

The gaps and wounds of the healthcare system exposed

Rising to the challenge

# The Perfect Storm

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# The Perfect Storm

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Effectiveness of national disaster plans?

The pandemic – domino impact on supply chains, production, every industry, home and school, the economy

Burnout





# Stresses

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Moving to remote or virtual work

Increased social isolation

Children being schooled at home

Parents juggling their own work and helping their children; or going to work and then once home assisting their children

Work stress in healthcare – PPE, fear of contracting COVID-19 and/or spreading it to family and friends.



# Impact specifically on healthcare

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Within healthcare, surge concerns resulting in cancellation of elective surgery and diagnostics in order to redeploy staff and retain bed capacity.

Rapid / leapfrog shift to virtual care.

Impact of delayed diagnosis and treatment.... Impact on longer term health of the individual and health of the population, increased workload, working overtime

Burnout

# The Ottawa Citizen

## June 20, 2022

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### Headline:

Hospital OR's running under capacity;  
backlogs, wait times part of a growing  
healthcare crisis



# Rapid changes

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Taking risks with innovation and change, without thoughtful analysis and an implementation strategy which would have occurred if time permitted.

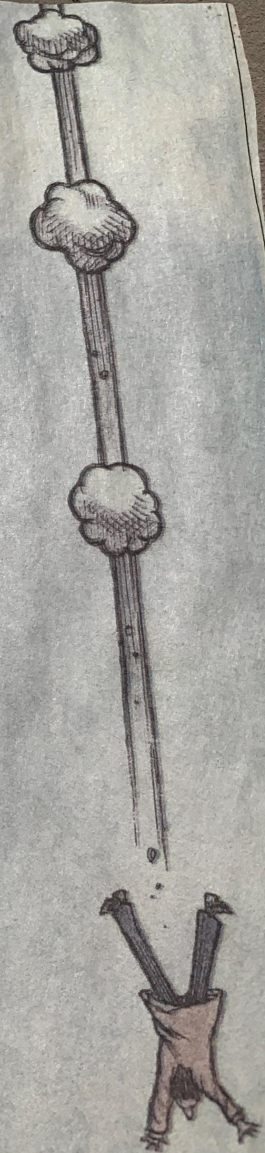
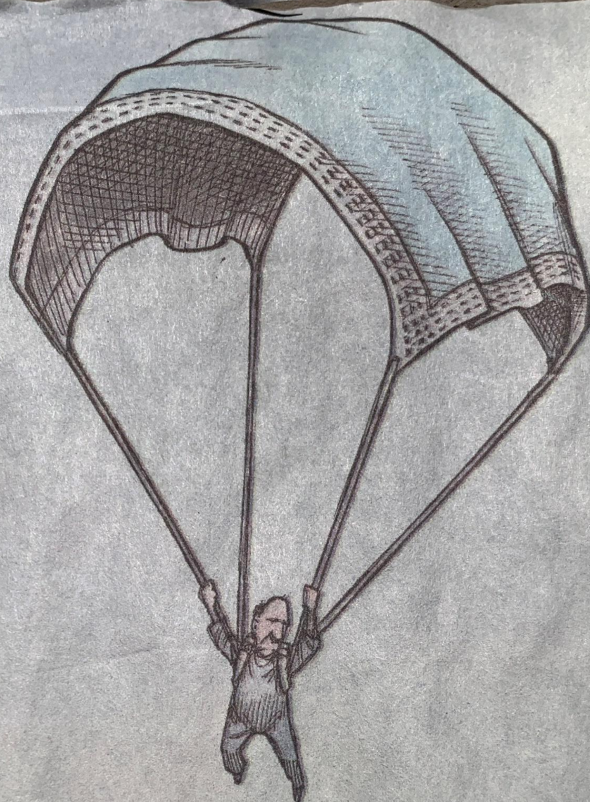
Dr. Neelam Dhingra “the pandemic exposed existing weaknesses in the healthcare systems, has diminished the capacity of healthcare systems, with a substantial impact on patient safety”. The “impact of misinformation is a global phenomenon”.\*

We are now evaluating many of these changes, through the rearview or sideview mirror.



*\*Webinar “Implication of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Patient Safety: A Rapid Review” WHO, 09 August 2022.  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240055094>.*

artizans.com



...HE'S GOING TO THE ANTI-PARACHUTE RALLY...

# Health Human Resource Crisis

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Predicted

Worsened by the pandemic – burnout, early retirements, decisions to change career

Massive shortages of healthcare workers – i.e. nurses, physicians

None of us have been spared. Mutual support essential.



# Headline – July 22, 2022


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Hamilton

## Hamilton hospitals down 675 employees amid record-high health-care worker shortages

Hamilton's health-care system 'is in a very precarious position,' executive vice president of HHS says

CBC News · Posted: Jul 22, 2022 9:15 AM ET | Last Updated: July 22



According to the hospitals, despite aggressive recruitment efforts, the number of qualified applicants is often not enough to fill vacancies. (Hamilton Health Sciences/ St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton)

Hamilton's two hospital organizations, Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH), need 675 new employees to address the current workforce shortage.

In a joint news release, the two organizations warned that service impacts and increasingly high wait times are likely to be an ongoing reality for Hamilton's hospitals.

# Leading since March 2020

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Ground has shifted

Leaders throughout healthcare – similar priorities

The stresses throughout the healthcare system, personal and professional, have been unrelenting.

How long will this stressful reality continue without a glimmer of promise and hope?

# Transformative changes

*Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Patient Safety, WHO, 2022*

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## **Leadership and Culture**

- Silos broke down; widespread sharing of clinical information and best practices

## **Vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics**

- Rapid development; clinical trials expedited

## **Service delivery transformations**

- Rapid progress in the development of innovative crisis management programs, development of checklists, new clinical protocols

## **Awareness of overall health, self-care and digital literacy**

- More public awareness

## **Health worker safety**

- Increased awareness of mental health and importance of caring for health workers

## **Industrial developments**

- Many start-ups to help with the supply of essential items to hospitals; innovative solutions; upgrading of existing vaccine production, licensing and delivery

## **Digital transformations and innovations**

- New care pathways, diagnostic technologies, novel at-home diagnostic tools; digital communication between patients and care prov.

## **Overall approach to managing the pandemic**

- Rapid, science-based risk assessment with early and decisive gov't action

# Leadership

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All of us within healthcare are leaders – whether the term ‘leader’ is in our title as Manager, Director, Coordinator or not

We are viewed and respected by our patients and families as leaders when we provide them with healthcare and education in a clinic or upon discharge from the hospital

Remember the power of our message and our potential to influence health behaviours and practices

When we become upset with something that other leaders are saying or doing, we must look in the mirror – at that time, are we an effective role model? What is our responsibility when the ‘system’ is in crisis?



# Effective leadership

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Essential for:

Provision of quality healthcare

Achievement of improved outcomes

Improved population health

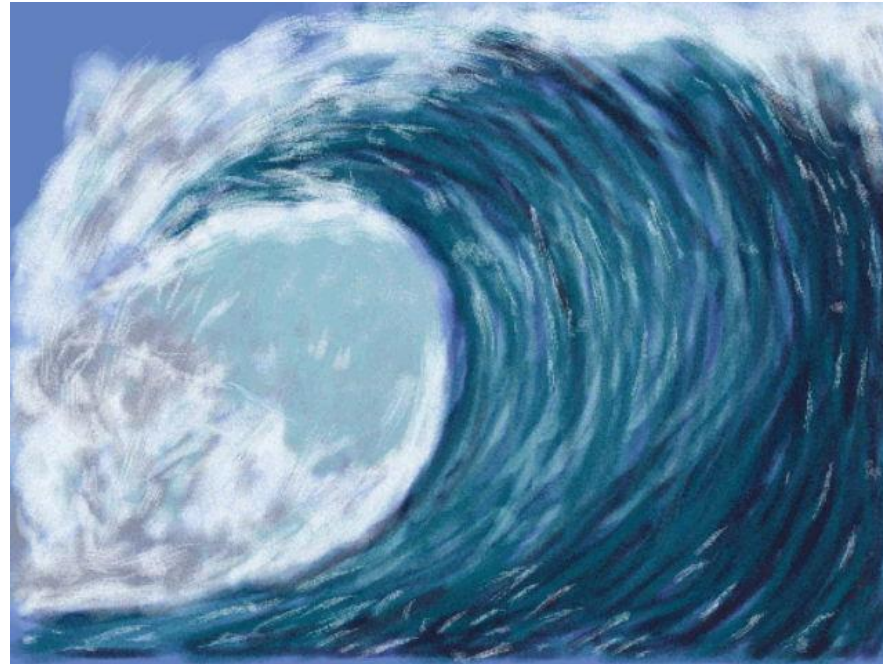
Attainment of high organizational performance/ health system performance

Weak leadership:

Impacts culture, performance and outcomes.

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**Effective leadership** for healthcare quality and safety is necessary to bring stability and hope as we ride the tidal wave of the pandemic and the HHR crisis.



# Dimensions of Quality

Accreditation Canada

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- Safety
- Client-Centred Services
- Worklife
- Efficiency
- Appropriateness
- Accountability
- Population Focus
- Community

# Institute of Medicine: Attributes for a quality health care system

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Safe

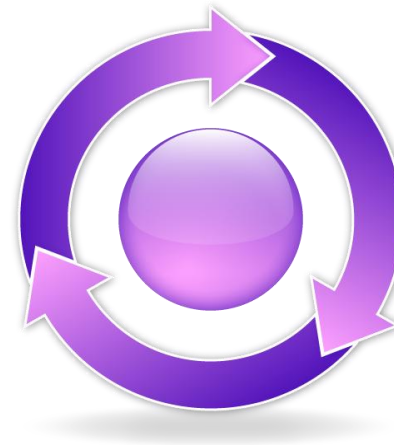
Effective

Patient Centered

Timely

Efficient

Equitable



*All attributes must be considered in  
balance.*

# Poll

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Compared to 2018, do you believe that the quality of healthcare in your country today is:

- a) Better
- b) The same
- c) Worse

# Declining quality of care

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Healthcare systems are under constant chronic stress.

Escalating risk in the healthcare environment related to:

- Delay of surgery, delayed diagnostics and treatment
- Rapid move to virtual care
- Staff shortages
- Increasing number of unskilled workers
- Burnout of all those working related to workload has increased, stress at home



Ontario Legislature resumes...

NEASE '22  
neasecartoons.com

ALL HANDS  
ON DECK!





# Escalating risk for patients and staff

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The healthcare environment is more risky and more unsafe than it was 5 years ago.

As leaders, we are challenged to lead a workforce, to nurture and cultivate a culture, that enables the provision of quality care, in an environment that is safe for our patients and families, and safe for our co-workers.

# Culture of quality (and safety)

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- Person-centred
  - Focus on the care provider, care recipient, all those within the healthcare environment
- Respect, trust, caring, warmth
- Psychological safety
- Transparency
- No-blame
- Learning environment
- Quality focus embedded in everything
- Outcomes focus
- Innovative (risk taking)
- Strong leadership
- Effective and high performing teams
- Measurement / monitoring systems

# Nurse – guilty of criminally negligent homicide and gross neglect

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Nurse RaDonda Vaught

Vanderbilt University Medical Centre

2017

75 year old patient- to undergo a PET scan

Nurse accidentally administered Vecuronium (neuromuscular blocker) instead of Versed (drug to treat anxiety)

Quickly admitted to making a mistake and system factors also identified

“Criminalizing unintentional medical mistakes perpetuates an unrealistic and dangerous standard of perfection in health care.... That those who make mistakes are incompetent and must be shown the door”

“The goal should be to adjust safety standards and practices to mitigate future risk.”

*The problem with prosecuting Medical Error. By D. Curry and B. Richards. July 2022.*

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Reviewing the necessary elements of a culture which enables quality care, which of these elements do you believe may have been negatively impacted by the criminal outcome of the incident at Vanderbilt University Medical Centre?

# Style of leadership – impact of pandemic

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What is your style of leadership?

Are you a consensus builder, a leader who is analytical?

Do you take time to listen to all input, involve the appropriate stakeholders and methodically makes decisions?

Are you an effective communicator?

# Style of Leadership – pandemic shift

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“During the pandemic we experienced rapid deployment of technology and innovations, massive shifts in work and workspaces, significantly truncated cycles for adopting change.

We witnessed a regression in leadership approaches, stepping back to more traditional ‘command and control’ styles of leadership and management, which is more familiar and safer during times of great uncertainty.”

“There is progress in how and what we do but with the loss of progress in how we lead.”

*Reflections in a Time of Crisis: What it takes to manage and lead integrated systems of Care. Stein, V, Miller, R, Goldhar, J., Wojtak, A. International Foundation for Integrated care. 2022*

# Critical behaviours for leading

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Person-centeredness – in everything you do

Front line engagement – regular authentic presence and visible champion for improvement

Relentless focus on vision and strategy

Transparency – about results, process, and aims

Boundarilessness – systems thinking and collaboration across boundaries

*IHI White Paper, 2013, “High-Impact Leadership: Improve Care, Improve the health of populations, reduce costs”.*



# Examine your own leadership style

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- Look in the mirror!
- Effective leadership – essential for:
  - the provision of quality healthcare
  - improved outcomes
  - population health
  - high organizational performance / high healthcare system performance

*\*all levels – from point of care through to gov't, and all partners – professionals, patients, organizations*

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The pandemic and the Health Human Resource crisis have exposed the gaps and wounds within our healthcare systems.

Improvements are needed now.

Some systems can be improved, others need to be totally rebuilt.

# Our current leadership challenge

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“.....is beyond what we could have imagined 3 years go.”

To ensure quality and safety in healthcare, how do we effectively lead today?? How do you effectively lead today?

# Leaders must be sensitive to the leadership challenges.

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Quality of care has declined; there is escalating risk in the healthcare environment.

Risk is higher not only for the patients, but also for the staff.

The standard of care has been lowered. How do we ensure this does not become the accepted norm?

We are leading organizations within which post-pandemic PTSD is a reality.

As a leader, what does this mean to your approach to leadership for quality and safety?

How must you change or adapt??

# Guidance

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Examine your organization's culture – what do you monitor to determine the health of your organization's culture?

Are your KPIs sufficiently sensitive to identify changes in culture, changes in performance and changes in outcomes?

Be sure to retain some of the benefits that were enabled by the pandemic – encouraging innovation and risk, working across sectors.

Retain some of the positive changes in your own leadership style that have evolved during this stressful period.

# Remember the transformative changes

*Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Patient Safety, WHO, 2022*

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# Take care of yourself; personal accountability

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Look in the mirror – how are you coping?

Take time to personally decompress.

What strategies do you utilize to relax and distract yourself?

If you care for yourself, you are better able to care for others.

Try to keep your sense of humour.

**How we effectively lead for today is not how we will effectively lead for tomorrow – leaders adapt their approach, styles and behaviours – to the context, stresses, and team strengths.**

# Conclusion

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**Leadership throughout this pandemic has been a challenge for everyone.**

**Be sensitive and supportive to those with whom you work. Take time to share concerns and successes.**

**Effective leadership during this sustained chronic crisis, the Perfect Storm, has presented all of us with opportunities – opportunities to grow, to improve our organization and care, to try new practices. Seize those opportunities! Continue leading for quality and safety.**

# Summary

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Effective leadership

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Culture

Leadership style

The gaps and wounds of the healthcare system exposed

Rising to the challenge

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Dankie Gracias  
Спасибо شكراً  
Merci Takk  
Köszönjük Terima kasih  
Grazie Dziękujemy Děkojame  
Ďakujeme Vielen Dank Paldies  
Kiitos Täname teid 谢谢  
**Thank You** Tak  
感謝您 Obrigado Teşekkür Ederiz  
Σας Ευχαριστούμ 감사합니다  
ขอบคุณ  
Bedankt Děkujeme vám  
ありがとうございます  
Tack



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