

For Immediate Release

Creating a Safety Culture Playbook for Health Care Leaders

Chicago, IL, and Boston, MA, Jan. 27, 2016—Patient safety experts and researchers have increasingly pointed to the role of organizational culture in the success of patient and workforce safety initiatives. Yet, creating a culture of safety in health care settings has proven to be a challenging endeavor, and there is a lack of clear actions for organizational leaders to take in developing such a culture.

Seeking to bridge this gap in knowledge and resources, the [American College of Healthcare Executives](#) (ACHE) and the [National Patient Safety Foundation's Lucian Leape Institute](#) are collaborating on the development of a "playbook" to help leaders create and sustain the kind of culture needed to advance patient and workforce safety.

"In recent years, we have seen more evidence of how essential safety culture is in making health care safer, but you can't just say to people, 'Go fix your culture,'" said **Tejal K. Gandhi, MD, MPH, CPPS**, president and chief executive officer, NPSF and the Institute. "Our goal is to provide senior health care leaders with a strategic and tactical plan. Working with ACHE will provide valuable perspectives and ensure that health care leaders are driving the solutions."

A recent [NPSF report](#) describes a culture of safety as one in which health care professionals are held accountable for unprofessional conduct, yet not punished for human mistakes; errors are identified and mitigated before harm occurs; and systems are in place to enable staff to learn from errors and near-misses and prevent recurrence. The report further emphasizes that leaders are responsible for setting the culture in their organizations.

"Leadership is fundamental to creating a culture of safety, yet there is a real need for practical knowledge around how to lead and sustain culture change," said **Deborah J. Bowen, FACHE, CAE**, president and chief executive officer, ACHE. "This collaboration will provide leaders with strategies they can pursue to improve patient safety, workforce safety, and quality of care. Combining the safety expertise of the NPSF Lucian Leape Institute with ACHE's leadership development expertise is an important step toward engaging top leaders in innovative leadership solutions."

As a first step in their collaboration, ACHE and NPSF announced the co-chairs of the project. **Charles D. Stokes, FACHE**, is executive vice president and chief operating officer of Memorial Hermann Health System in Houston. Stokes is a member of ACHE's Board of Governors and has been nominated to serve as the 2016–2017 Chairman-Elect. **Gary S. Kaplan, MD, FACMPE**, is chair and chief executive officer of Virginia Mason Health System in Seattle, and chair of the NPSF Lucian Leape Institute.

This work will be informed by a panel of safety experts, health care leaders, and stakeholders, whose members will be decided in the coming weeks. The safety culture playbook is planned for release in 2017.

About the American College of Healthcare Executives

The **American College of Healthcare Executives** is an international professional society of 40,000 healthcare executives who lead hospitals, healthcare systems and other healthcare organizations. ACHE's mission is to advance our members and healthcare management excellence. ACHE offers its prestigious FACHE® credential, signifying board certification in healthcare management. ACHE's established network of 80 chapters provides

access to networking, education and career development at the local level. In addition, ACHE is known for its magazine, Healthcare Executive, and its career development and public policy programs. Through such efforts, ACHE works toward its vision of being the preeminent professional society for healthcare executives dedicated to improving health. **The Foundation of the American College of Healthcare Executives** was established to further advance healthcare management excellence through education and research. The Foundation of ACHE is known for its educational programs—including the annual Congress on Healthcare Leadership, which draws more than 4,000 participants—and groundbreaking research. Its publishing division, Health Administration Press, is one of the largest publishers of books and journals on health services management including textbooks for college and university courses. For more information, visit www.ache.org.

About the National Patient Safety Foundation

The National Patient Safety Foundation's vision is to create a world where patients and those who care for them are free from harm. A central voice for patient safety since 1997, NPSF partners with patients and families, the health care community, and key stakeholders to advance patient safety and health care workforce safety and disseminate strategies to prevent harm. NPSF is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. To learn more about the Foundation's work, visit www.npsf.org.

About the NPSF Lucian Leape Institute

The NPSF Lucian Leape Institute, established in 2007, is charged with defining strategic paths and calls to action for the field of patient safety, offering vision and context for the many efforts under way within health care, and providing the leverage necessary for system-level change. Its members are national thought leaders with a common interest in patient safety whose expertise and influence are brought to bear as the Institute calls for the innovation necessary to expedite the work and create significant, sustainable improvements in culture, process, and outcomes critical to safer health care.

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