

Press Release

From the Missouri Center for Patient Safety



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Many Health Care Providers More at Ease with Reporting Errors
Missouri's health care Just Culture project a success

COLUMBIA, Mo. — At the conclusion of a statewide project to erase stigmas around reporting medical errors, survey results show participating health care providers feel more comfortable with reporting health care mistakes compared to in 2007.

The project is called the Missouri Just Culture Collaborative and was formed in 1997. Involving 67 health organizations, the project united hospitals and other health care providers with regulatory agencies in an effort to increase understanding of why medical errors happen and how to prevent them. Just Culture training was provided to approximately 4,000 health care professionals.

“More often than not, medical errors aren’t the result of a bad staff member. They result from bad processes within the healthcare system. The Just Culture Collaborative is about shifting the focus from ‘Who did this?’ to ‘How can we keep this from happening again?’ When we do this, Missouri’s health care system becomes safer,” said Becky Miller, executive director of the Missouri Center for Patient Safety (MOCPS). An independent nonprofit, MOCPS led the collaborative.

“Health care is much more effective when we change our focus from rooting out bad apples to finding why they spoil,” said Miller. “This doesn’t mean we excuse negligence.

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Instead, we strive toward an appropriate balance between punitive and blame-free cultures.”

An assessment of the leadership team perspectives before and after the collaborative showed a shift toward leadership gaining a perspective that more closely matches the perceptions of staff members at the front line of health care. Such a change can help establish a culture that encourages open communication about mistakes and how to present them.

However, room for improvement remains. Culture change takes time to remove old stigmas associated with fear about openly reporting errors, an area of continued focus for the MOCPS and Missouri health care providers.

The Just Culture Collaborative was financed through a grant from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

About MOCPS

As a private, not-for-profit corporation, the Missouri Center for Patient Safety (MOCPS) is dedicated to fostering change throughout Missouri's health care systems. Based in Jefferson City, the mission of MOCPS is to improve health care quality and patient safety in collaboration with health care providers, physicians, purchasers, consumers and government. MOCPS is a federally-recognized Patient Safety Organization. Online at www.mocps.org

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