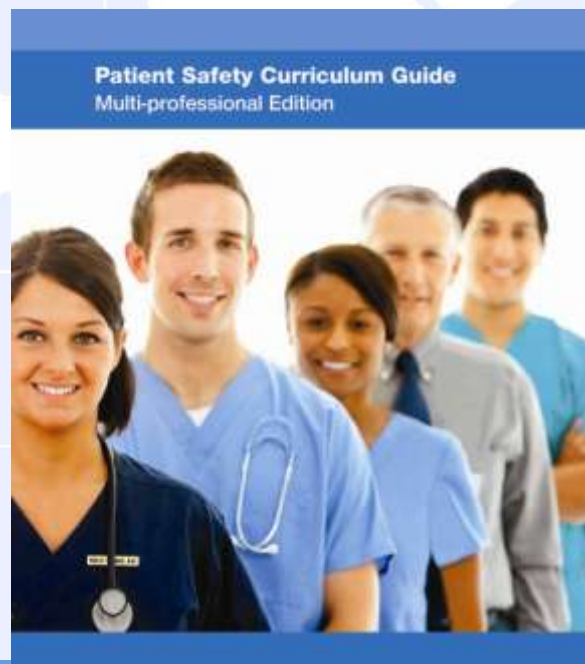


Topic 6

Understanding and managing clinical risk



Why clinical risk is relevant to patient safety

Clinical risk management specifically is concerned with improving the quality and safety of health-care services by identifying the circumstances and opportunities that put patients at risk of harm and acting to prevent or control those risks

Four-step process to clinical risk management

- Identify the risk
- Assess the frequency and severity of the risk
- Reduce or eliminate the risk
- Cost the risk

Learning objective

Know how to apply risk-management principles by identifying, assessing and reporting hazards and potential risks in the workplace

Knowledge requirements

- The activities used for gathering information about risk
- Fitness-to-practise requirements
- Personal accountability for managing clinical risk

Performance requirements

- Keep accurate and complete health-care records
- Participate in meetings to discuss risk management and patient safety
- Respond appropriately to patients and families after an adverse event
- Respond appropriately to complaints
- Maintain their own health and well-being

Gathering information about risk

- Incident monitoring
- Sentinel events
- The role of complaints in improving care
- Complaints and concerns where the individual is responsible
- Coronial Investigations

Sentinel events

Unexpected occurrence involving death or serious physical or psychological injury and including any process variation for which a recurrence would carry a significant chance of serious adverse outcome

Source: Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, 1999

Complaints

- Assist in maintaining standards
- Reduce the frequency of litigation
- Help maintain trust in the profession
- Encourage self-assessment
- Protect the public

Fitness-to-practise requirements

- Credentialing
- Accreditation
- Registration

Professional development and self-assessment

- Role of fatigue and fitness to practise
- Stress and mental health problems
- Work environment and organization
- Supervision
- Communication

How to understand and manage clinical risks

- Know how to report known risks or hazards in the workplace
- Keep accurate and complete health-care records
- Know when and how to ask for help from an instructor, supervisor or appropriate senior health-care professional
- Participate in meetings that discuss risk management and patient safety
- Respond appropriately to patients and families after an adverse event
- Respond appropriately to complaints

Summary

All health-care professionals should:

- Be responsible for their patients – not just the seniors
- Be personally accountable to prevent harm
- Identify areas prone to errors
- Work to maintain a safe clinical working environment by looking after their own health and responding appropriately to concerns from patients and colleagues