

## Medication Without Harm



WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge

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Global Patient Safety Challenge



World Health  
Organization

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Global Patient Safety Challenge



## Empowering patients and families for medication safety Patient engagement tool: “5 Moments for Medication Safety”

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# Patient Engagement in Medication Safety in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

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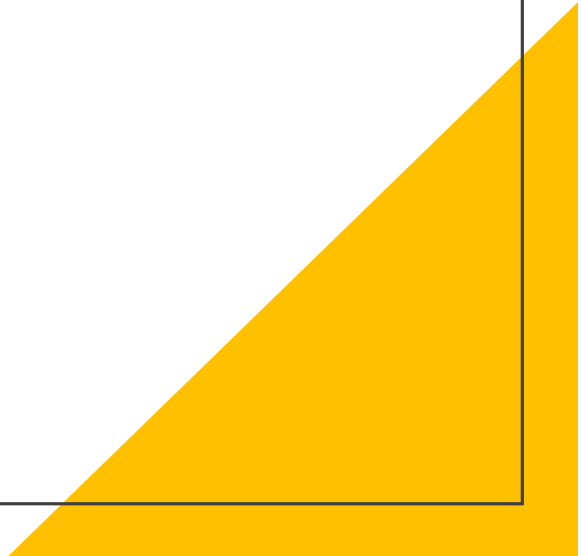
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Patient engagement is essential to safe medication use

To engage patients, we must first engage health care workers

- ✓ Doctors
  - ✓ Nurses
  - ✓ Pharmacists
  - ✓ Hospital administrators
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## **Barriers to patient engagement: PHYSICIANS**

- Doctors have too little time to discuss medications with the patient
  - Patients leave without vital information such as risks, side effects, or when to stop the medication
  - Doctors who are pressed for time may not ask what other medicines the patient is taking
  - Some medicines could lead to addiction or fatal errors if not well explained
- Bad handwriting
  - This is a particular danger for low-literacy patients
- Lack of follow-up with patients
  - The physician often does not learn how well the medication worked or if an adverse event occurred
- Poor documentation of medications in patients' medical records

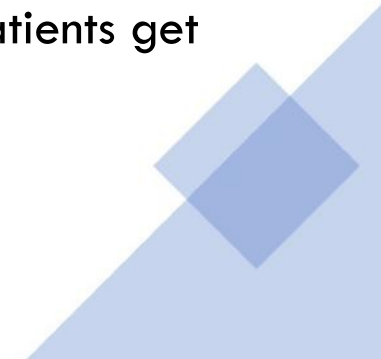


# Barriers to patient engagement: NURSES

- Nurses are not always taught patient engagement and communication or expected to have these skills
- Poor patient engagement is compounded by
  - Heavy workloads
  - Lack of ongoing medication safety training
  - Inadequate supervision
  - Lack of accountability for safety and quality of care
  - System factors such as look-alike, sound-alike medications
    - Overloaded nurses can make mistakes and give the wrong medication
    - Patients do not have the knowledge to catch the mistakes




## **Barriers to patient engagement: PHARMACISTS**

- Community pharmacists play a large role in medical care in many countries
    - Patients find it easier and cheaper to go to a pharmacist for care than to a doctor's clinic
    - Pharmacists give medicines without prescription, which is a big problem
  - Unqualified assistants are sometimes left in charge of pharmacies
  - There is no follow-up with doctor when patients get unprescribed medicines
- 



## **Barriers to patient engagement: HOSPITALS**

- Risk to patients is amplified by factors the patient do not know about
    - Improper storage of drugs
    - Not separating high-risk medications from other medications, raising the likelihood of misidentification
    - Wrong dose sent to the patient
  - Too few hospital pharmacists - means there is often no medication review upon discharge
  - Care is poorly coordinated
    - Patients may be left in-charge of their own care with little information, increasing chance of improper medication
  - There are few good systems for reporting adverse events and medication errors
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# Patient factors contributing to medication safety issues

- Illiteracy/poor education
  - Uneducated patients can not read labels, expiry dates, instructions, doctors' handwriting
- Low income
  - Leads to depending on pharmacists for health care
- Complete trust in doctors and nurses as authorities
- Lack of knowledge about their medications
- Reluctance to ask questions
  - Patients do not know what to ask
  - Doctor may not be receptive to questions
- Difficulty of reporting errors and adverse events
  - No clear reporting channel
  - Patients don't know how to report
  - Patients do not trust that reporting will have an effect



# **Patient engagement: Possible solutions for health care providers**

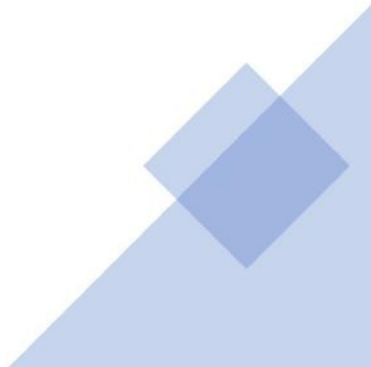
## **Ask governments and hospitals to**

- Develop patient champions in hospitals
- Train health care providers how to talk to patients
  - How to use plain language
  - What to tell patients
  - What to ask patients
- Improve regulation of medications and pharmacies
- Improve coordination of dispensing and supervision of nurses
- It's all about training, supervision, prevention of errors. This will give confidence to patients



## **Patient engagement: Solutions aimed at patients**

### Use media and NGOs to

- Create expectations
    - To tell doctor about other medications
    - To review medicines at transitions
    - To expect follow-up from doctor
  - Teach patients not to be afraid
    - To ask for more time in the appointment
    - To ask questions about medicines
    - Not to give up; keep asking!
  - Teach patients the questions to ask
    - Medication side effects and interactions
    - When to stop a medicine
    - How to store their medicines...
  - Teach how to report adverse events and errors
    - Create a good system
    - Make reporting easy to do
    - Encourage people to do it
- 

# Conclusions

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- The problem of the patient in our countries is complicated
- Everything is interconnected. You cannot exclude empowering the patient from other factors
- If hospitals and providers control well for safety and awareness, they will have success in patient engagement
- Government, the media and NGOs have a large role to play in raising awareness

# 5 Moments for Medication Safety



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# 5 Moments for Medication Safety

## GOAL

Raise awareness among patients of need to take precautions to ensure medication safety.

## PRESENTATION

Plain language guide raising questions for patients to ask at key moments at which risk of harm from medications can be reduced.

## INSPIRATION

Sir Liam Donaldson and the 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>



# 5 Moments for Medication Safety



## Starting a medication

- ▶ What is the name of this medication and what is it for?
- ▶ What are the risks and possible side-effects?



## Taking my medication

- ▶ When should I take this medication and how much should I take each time?
- ▶ What should I do if I have side-effects?



## Adding a medication

- ▶ Do I really need any other medication?
- ▶ Can this medication interact with my other medications?



## Reviewing my medication

- ▶ How long should I take each medication?
- ▶ Am I taking any medications I no longer need?



## Stopping my medication

- ▶ When should I stop each medication?
- ▶ If I have to stop my medication due to an unwanted effect, where should I report this?

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>

## 5 questions for each moment

- Some are self-reflective for the patient
- Some may require support from the health care professional

## Active patient engagement

- Intended to encourage curiosity about the medications patients are taking
- Intended to empower patients and caregivers to communicate openly with their health professionals.

For use at all levels of care and across all settings.



# 5 Moments for Medication Safety

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>



- ▶ What is the name of this medication and what is it for?
  - ▶ What are the risks and possible side-effects?
  - ▶ Is there another way of treating my condition?
  - ▶ Have I told my health professional about my allergies and other health conditions?
  - ▶ How should I store this medication?
- 
- ▶ When should I take this medication and how much should I take each time?
  - ▶ How should I take the medication?
  - ▶ Is there anything related to food and drink that I should know while taking this medication?
  - ▶ What should I do if I miss a dose of this medication?
  - ▶ What should I do if I have side-effects?
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- ▶ Do I really need any other medication?
  - ▶ Have I told my health professional about the medications I am already taking?
  - ▶ Can this medication interact with my other medications?
  - ▶ What should I do if I suspect an interaction?
  - ▶ Will I be able to manage multiple medications correctly?
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- ▶ Do I keep a list of all my medications?
  - ▶ How long should I take each medication?
  - ▶ Am I taking any medications I no longer need?
  - ▶ Does a health professional check my medications regularly?
  - ▶ How often should my medications be reviewed?
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- ▶ When should I stop each medication?
  - ▶ Should any of my medications not be stopped suddenly?
  - ▶ What should I do if I run out of medication?
  - ▶ If I have to stop my medication due to an unwanted effect, where should I report this?
  - ▶ What should I do with leftover or expired medications?



## **5 Moments** for Medication Safety

### Formats:

- Booklet with guidance
- Flyer
- Infographic poster
- Pamphlet
- Mobile app

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>



# Introducing Mobile Application on

## 5 Moments for Medication Safety



### WHO medsafe app

Will guide you through the 5 key moments where your action can reduce the risk of medication-related harm.

Ask your health care professional important questions, keep the answers in a structured way to better manage your medications. Stay Healthy!

Powered by:



Thank you