Enhancing Radiation Safety Culture in Health Care

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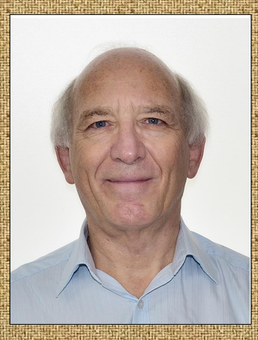

'***Enhancing radiation safety culture in health care***' forthcoming World Health Organization publication (IAEA, IOMP, IRPA, WHO project)

WHO,[1] IAEA,[2] IRPA,[3] and IOMP[4] have joined forces to produce guidance on Radiation Safety Culture in Health Care (RSCHC).[5]

The guidance will be published by WHO. It supports the **WHO Global Patient Safety Action Plan (2021-2030):** ***Towards eliminating avoidable patient harm in health care***, which has a strong emphasis on promoting **safety culture**, **just culture** and **learning** within healthcare systems.[6]

This joint project from these 4 international organisations stems from **Action 8 of the 2012 Bonn Call-for-Action**, to strengthen radiation safety culture in health care.[7]

It took shape in 6 regional workshops which focused on different aspects of radiation safety culture in health care.* It embodies the **ten safety traits** considered **essential for improving radiation safety culture in medical institutions**.[8,9]

*Regional Workshop			Topic
1	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Apr 2015	Stakeholder engagement
2	Geneva, Switzerland	Dec 2015	Key elements in each area/discipline
3	Stellenbosch, South Africa	Dec 2016	Paediatric radiology
4	Doha, Qatar	Feb 2017	Challenges from advanced technology
5	Putrajaya, Malaysia	Nov 2017	Integration of RSCHC into the broader concept of patient safety
6	San Diego, USA	Feb 2019	Tools for and indicators of RSCHC

The guidance distinguishes between radiation safety (actions taken to protect patients and staff), **and radiation safety culture** (organisational and individual attitudes, behaviours and actions that determine how radiation safety is practised in the organisation, involving ideas, values and customs)

" how we do things here (when no-one is watching) "

SWOT analysis of issues affecting RSCHC:

Strengths:

Leadership; Government / Health Authority engagement; Latest technology; Emerging economies

Weaknesses:

Shortage of resources; Lack of Medical Physics recognition; Hierarchy; Patient demands; Limited training opportunities

Opportunities:

International support & engagement; Language links; Regional campaigns

Threats:

Diversity; Cultural differences; Political issues; De-motivation

Communication, education and training are key components of radiation safety culture. It is important that RSCHC is seen in terms of patients' expectations and as part of overall quality processes.

RSCHC is rooted in the **international radiation safety framework**, instilled in **international standards and guidelines**, and shaped by **international, national and local initiatives**.

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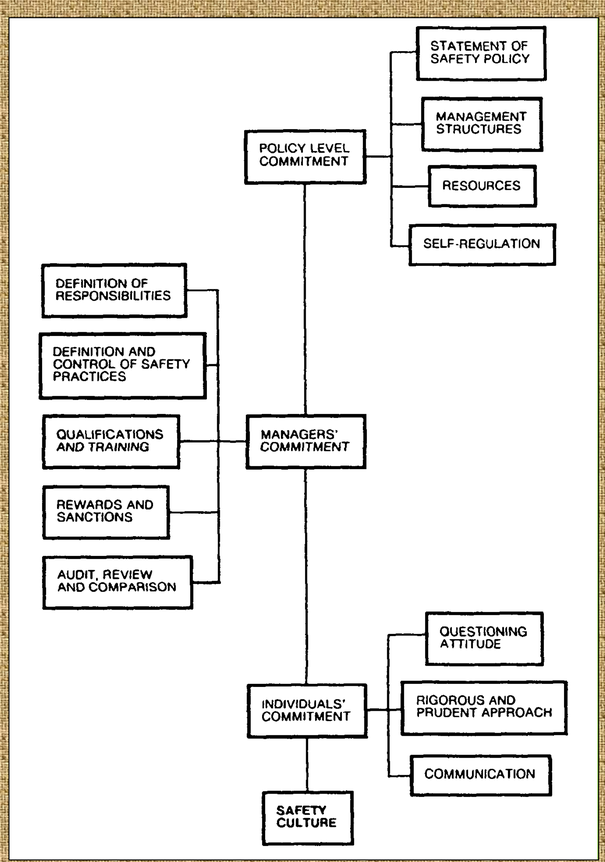
The guidance proposes ten tools for establishing and maintaining RSCHC

Standards and regulations
Policies and procedures
Education and training
Audit activities
Communication strategy
Reporting and learning systems
Checklist
Verification and review
Time out
Technological development



Major components of safety culture, illustrating the need for commitment from organisational leaders, managers and individuals.[10]

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