



## **Canadian Patient Safety Institute**

**Submission to the House of Commons Finance Committee**

**Pre Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2017 Federal Budget**

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*Safe care...accepting no less  
Soins sécuritaires...n'acceptons rien de moins*

## About the Canadian Patient Safety Institute

Patient Safety is all we do. It's the sole focus of all our efforts and the driver behind our goals. At the core of a healthcare system that continually improves, preserves and cares for our health is **patient safety**. Patient safety exists to safeguard and maintain the integrity of our healthcare system and is a core driver (if not **the** core driver) in meeting the expectations and trust patients place in it. Patient safety plays a distinct and vital role in our healthcare system, and we at the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) play a distinct role in patient safety.

Funded by Health Canada since 2004, CPSI is an organization that exists to raise awareness and to achieve a transformation in patient safety. CPSI's mission is to empower healthcare leaders, care providers and Canadians with the tools and information they need to improve the quality and safety of our healthcare system.

CPSI's leadership, extensive patient engagement, education programs, awareness campaigns and research efforts reflect our desire to close the gap between the healthcare we have and the healthcare Canadians deserve. *We believe our Canadian healthcare system should dependably improve, preserve and care for our health, never harm it.*

Our commitment and passion to improve patient safety in Canada over the past thirteen years is just the beginning and a fraction of CPSI's potential to impact the healthcare system. We are shifting our focus to give Canadians a greater voice in their own healthcare. With this mind, CPSI's next mandate from Health Canada could represent a major step forward in the Canadian Patient Safety Institute's evolution and present a significant opportunity for the Government of Canada to advance the quality of healthcare across Canada.

***Proposal for Budget 2017: CPSI's mandate ends in 2018. We are the natural leader in creating transformational change in patient safety and the healthcare system. CPSI requires a renewed long-term federal investment to create a movement that is ignited to support and sustain the integrity of our cherished (often over-burdened) healthcare system and ensure that the scale and spread of patient safety benefits every patient.***

## CPSI's Impact on the Canadian Healthcare System

With limited resources and a strong dedication to maximizing our impact, CPSI has made Canada's healthcare system safer. We are working tirelessly every day to prevent the next avoidable patient safety incident that may happen to someone you know. To achieve this goal, CPSI has developed and implemented extensive programs and resources designed to educate providers and patients and reduce avoidable harm.

## Harm still happens despite our best intentions

Nearly all patient safety incidents are preventable, yet they still happen at an alarming rate. Avoidable patient safety events are negative, unintended consequences of care experienced by patients in a multitude of care settings. Safety incidents range from infections in the ICU to medication overdoses on a medical surgical unit to falls in long-term care homes. Until recently these problems were viewed as

unfortunate consequences of Canada’s healthcare system; however they are now seen as failures in quality of care, many of which are preventable.

Incidents of avoidable harm are not only devastating to Canadian families; they occur too often in Canada. An estimated 30, 000 patients die in hospital each year because of preventable adverse incidences. Two-hundred thousand patients will develop infection; they did not have before their hospital stay. This is simply unacceptable!

Harm experienced by patients, and the impact on families, staff and organizations continues despite some successful measures and efforts to change unsafe practices. A follow up report released in November 2015, *Beyond the Quick Fix; Strategies for Improving Patient Safety*, found that despite the gains made since 2004, “healthcare organizations still struggle to address key patient safety issues.”

Our unique purpose at CPSI is to create a universal culture of patient safety with our Canadian healthcare system.

### **Patient safety is important to all Canadians**

Patient safety is a fundamental principle of healthcare which defines Canada’s strong, universally-accessible, publicly financed healthcare system. Yet, despite the respectable record of patient safety in Canada, we cannot guarantee that patients will not be harmed by the system meant to look after them. While the delivery of care is safer today than it was in 2004, Canada’s healthcare system remains unsafe. Harm still happens all too frequently.

Canadians may not think of patient safety until it has a direct and often profound impact on them. Personal stories of suffering caused by the healthcare system, whether told by the patients and families or by the healthcare professionals involved, are both moving and worrying. Canadian shared belief is that our healthcare system should improve, preserve and care for our health, never harm it.

### **CPSI’s accomplishments**

CPSI’s dedication to improving patient safety goes beyond raising awareness. CPSI works directly with healthcare leaders, care providers and patients across the healthcare spectrum to institute procedures and programs that have a direct and measureable impact on patient safety. Our contributions have made a noticeable and invaluable difference – preventing harm and saving lives.

Over the last thirteen years CPSI has galvanized key partners in Canadian healthcare to focus on some of the biggest patient safety challenges. CPSI is uniquely positioned to use our expertise, knowledge and thought leadership to not only make all Canadians aware of patient safety and its importance, but also to create and cultivate a culture of patient safety throughout Canada, while reducing harm

Our shared belief is by definition, one that extends beyond ourselves, to inspire and be supported by others. To continue shifting culture across our country, we simply cannot do it ourselves. We can lead and inspire but we do not have the resources to effectively reach every corner of the country. However in the same way we train the trainers to share and act upon our insights, we also partner with other organizations, inviting them to commit to our shared belief and find their own unique role in it. The power of collaboration allows us to reach more people and affect more change. It’s through this

greater web of connections that our organization sees our share belief spread, to inspire a true culture shift in patient safety.

No other organization in the country has the Canadian perspective on patient safety. We are the guardian of patient safety in Canada. We have impacted legislative change, we have single handily changed practice and we have engaged patients every step of the way.

The greatest evidence of this force in play is the Integrated Patient Safety Action Plan. We have brought together key partners in Canadian healthcare to focus on some of the biggest patient safety challenges and to align the work they are doing with some common goals in order to accelerate the pace and spread of patient safety improvements.

SHIFT to Safety developed by CPSI is the source of patient safety for the country. SHIFT focuses on the entire health system, including patients, families, providers and leaders. SHIFT to Safety was created to address the gap in the health system between clinical knowledge and best practices and to shift the focus of quality improvement to behavioural change strategies, empowering individuals within the system to make sustainable change.

Through Education Programs we have impacted students and health care providers in the way they provide care. We can ensure the proper shifts in practice and approach are taking place so that greater patient safety can take root and thrive.

Big changes take time. Consider the culture of wearing seatbelts. Automobile manufacturers did a lot to make cars safer. Governments did a lot to make roads safer. But individuals today still need to take personal responsibility for their safety by putting on their seatbelt.

We know the same can be said for CPSI. Our work is just beginning to ensure every clinicians, leader and patient takes responsibility for their role in safe care.

### **Our bold vision for the future**

We are striving for a future where a family member will never have to be taken into a room to hear that their mother or father, brother or sister, or son or daughter has died or been harmed because of a medical error.

We are striving for a future where a healthcare worker never has to feel the pain of knowing they have unintentionally inflicted harm on a patient.

Harm in healthcare is like a disease itself. It infects the spirit of families and healthcare providers and creates a profound lasting ripple of suffering. It is time to stop harm from happening.

To fulfill our purpose, we can't just wish it. We must create a culture and environment that allows our purpose to thrive. We at CPSI can create this bold future. We are that natural leader. Patient safety is all we do. It's the sole focus of all our efforts and the driver behind our goals.

# The Canadian Patient Safety Institute

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