

# PATIENT SAFETY CHECKLIST<sup>®</sup>: A SAFETY TOOL FOR PATIENT INVOLVEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** One National Patient Safety goal is to include and involve the patient. The author has designed the Patient Safety Checklists (PSChks) as an educational and safety tool for patients, as well as a means to engage patients in direct participation through empowerment and communication.

**Methods:** As a case study of the Community of Competence<sup>™</sup> (C of C), particularly the “Community of Nurses”, the Checklists are provided to patients to help better prepare for medical appointments and be more responsible with their own safety. Certain safety issues are addressed: basic physical safety, fall prevention, dealing with difficult caregivers, patient rights and responsibilities, etc. A sample of Checklists and descriptive analysis of how they are used and their distribution are presented.

**Results:** While professionals are familiar with safety checklists, patients are often excluded in activities to be more involved and be safe while receiving care. C of C strongly recommends placing the patient at the center of the healthcare system in order to achieve a true patient-centered healthcare. Checklists are simple tools to promote the involvement of patients. Individuals are using the Checklists to facilitate better communication and participation. Healthcare groups are using the Checklists for training and as supplements for standard patient surveys.

**Conclusions:** PSChks are cost-effective tools to promote patient safety by engaging the patients and involving them in their own care. Patients and families are receptive to the idea of active participation when given the opportunity to do so.

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