Learning from the NHS Mid Staffordshire Inquiry

An activity to help students improve the safety of patients in England and around the world

November 2013
Open School

How students can improve the safety of patients in England and around the world

This activity is designed to help you and your Chapter contribute to the improvement of patient care by reflecting on the experience of the Mid Staffordshire National Health Service (NHS) Foundation Trust Public Inquiry. This activity will give you an opportunity to collaborate with Dr. Donald Berwick, President Emeritus and Senior Fellow at IHI and Former Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and other leaders to determine how you — as students, junior doctors, and new professionals — can change yourselves, your schools, and your health systems to improve care.

Background & Overview

- Between 2005 and 2013, concerns around unusually high mortality rates amongst patients at the Stafford Hospital in Stafford, England resulted in a public inquiry and one of the biggest scandals in the history of the NHS. More than a million pages of evidence were submitted. The report argued for a "fundamental change" in the culture of the NHS to make sure patients were put first.

- As a result of this, Prime Minister David Cameron commissioned a team of health care experts, led by Dr. Berwick, to create “A Promise to Learn — A Commitment to Act: Improving the Safety of Patients in England,” (http://bit.ly/1gR8SAx) a report that includes recommendations to improve systems, safety, and culture in the NHS in England.

- The report has wide applicability to all health systems but does not include recommendations for students or educators.

In this activity, you will:

- On your own, learn (or review) what happened at Stafford hospital that sparked the inquiry. Then see how some students and professionals have reacted to the inquiry and the opportunity the inquiry presents.

- Together with your Chapter or colleagues, discuss your reactions to the materials you’ve reviewed. Then determine your Chapter’s recommendations for possible student and/or educator actions to improve care in your health system, and share them on the IHI Open School Website by Friday, November 8, 2013.

- Join the global WebEx discussion with Dr. Berwick on Tuesday, November 12, at 5:00 PM (BST), 12:00 PM (EST).
Learning from the NHS Mid Staffordshire Inquiry

Context:

To prepare for the Chapter or group activity, in which you will discuss some materials and create a list of recommended actions, please take approximately one hour to learn (or review) what happened at Stafford hospital (a small district hospital in Staffordshire, England) that caused an estimated 400–1,200 patient deaths as a result of poor care.

Then watch and read how some people in health care have reacted to the report and the opportunity the report presents.

Scan, Read, and Watch:

1. **Scan** this summary of the scandal by one of Britain’s national daily newspapers, *The Guardian*: “Mid Staffs Hospital Scandal: The Essential Guide” (http://bit.ly/1aVB1Br).
   (Or, if you have time, scan the full public inquiry executive summary, “Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry: Executive summary” (http://bit.ly/18sEqJg).

   (Bibby is Director of Strategy at The Health Foundation, former Head of NHS Performance, and a member of the taskforce commissioned with Dr. Berwick to respond to the report.)

3. **Watch** “Nursing the Nation by Molly Case” (http://bit.ly/1atOYFa), in which a second-year student nurse from London delivers a poem to the audience of the Royal College of Nursing Congress in 2013.
   (The video is approximately 4 minutes.)
Instructions:
Get together with your Chapter, or colleagues, after you have reviewed the report commissioned by Prime Minister David Cameron. The report was developed by a team of health care experts led by Dr. Berwick. It includes recommendations for the NHS on how to improve systems, safety, and culture in England, but it does not include recommendations for students or educators.

As a group, discuss the following questions:

- Have any of you experienced, first-hand, problems in your health systems that have the potential to lead to patient safety issues?
- Do you feel your training prepares you to deal with these issues? Why or why not?
- What is the role of students in improving care?
- What actions can students and educators take to improve care?

Agenda:
1. Welcome and overview.
2. Review together some of the key takeaways from “A Promise to Learn — A Commitment to Act: Improving the Safety of Patients in England.”
3. Discuss the questions above, as a group, based on your experiences and challenges.
4. Agree on top 5–6 actions for students and educator, and submit these to the IHI Open School by Friday, November 8, 2013.

Materials:
Website: Submit your top 5–6 actions to the IHI Open School website by Friday, November 8, 2013. (http://bit.ly/19egtVx).
Instructions:
After submitting your Chapter’s recommended actions for students and educators, join the call on **November 12, 2013** to hear from others and discuss with Dr. Berwick and the IHI Open School Community.

Agenda:
- **Welcome and Introductions**
  
  *Andrew Carson-Stevens, IHI Open School UK and Ireland Faculty Lead*

- **Background of the NHS Report**
  
  *Dr. Donald Berwick, President Emeritus and Senior Fellow at IHI, Former Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services*

- **Chapter Suggestions**
  
  *All participants*

- **Questions and Next Steps**
  
  *Panel and all participants*

Call Details:

**To join by Webex:**

1. Click here or go to [https://ihi.webex.com](https://ihi.webex.com) and click “IHI Open School: Students Improving Care November Call.”
2. Enter your name and email address.
3. Click "Join Now."
4. Follow the instructions to connect audio via phone or computer.

**To join by phone only:**

1. Use the call-in toll-free numbers:
   
   *(United States): **1-866-469-3239**
   *(United Kingdom): **0800-206-1176**

2. When prompted, enter the access code: **654 337 898 #**