

WENR

Athens, October 2009

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Patient safety has become a high priority in the agenda of health and welfare initiative in Europe and worldwide. Patient safety is an important part of the quality improvement movement. It is a major concern for health care professionals, health care organisations, patients and the wider society and policy makers. The nursing profession takes on the challenge to contribute to this complex issue, particularly through research, evidence based clinical practice, education, culture and factors concerning working environment. Collaborative research is necessary to ensure patient safety.

While nurses and other health care professionals are ensuring patient safety they are entitled to practice in a safe environment.

WENR recognises

- The causes of failure to secure patient safety are multifactorial evolving from human and organisational sources.
- Medication errors, hospital acquired infection and in this aspect hand hygiene are major patient safety issues.

WENR affirms that

- Patients have the right to a safe environment including safe health care and treatment.
- Patients have the right to be informed about risks related to their care and treatment.
- Patients have the right to access information regarding causes and consequences of adverse events.
- A systems approach to patient safety, that includes an open and just culture, should be promoted throughout Europe.
- Nurses should be engaged at all levels of policy and decision making regarding patient safety.
- All nurses should take a proactive role in patient safety and see it as integrated in all aspects of care.
- International, national and multidisciplinary collaboration is crucial to enhance patient safety.
- Patients safety should be underpinned by informed consent and patient autonomy.
- Nurse education is critical to delivering patient safety.

WENR recommends

To governments, NNAs, organisations and other stake holders to:

- identify trends and patterns in patient safety incidence (adverse event) and near misses and to understand the role of cultural factors
- promote studies focusing on clinical outcomes and patient safety issues (human factors and or system failures)
- set up trans(inter)national patient safety research groups and networks
- focus research on work environments including conditions and cultural factors for health care professionals
- improve the efforts to develop well educated and patient safety minded health care workforce
- strengthen the importance of the role nurses and nurse researchers play in discussing/promoting/advocating patient safety issues on a national and international level
- develop strategies to involve patients in research, policy development and decision making about patient safety
- mobilize human, financial and other resources to adequately support education, research and clinical practice related to patient safety.