

Learn How to be a Safe, Aware Patient

Posted by [petehurrey](#) On 03/09/2009

This week, March 8-14, is Patient Safety Awareness Week, a campaign aimed at raising awareness and improving patient safety. St. Mary's Hospital hopes to educate patients on how to become involved in their own health care and recognizes that patient safety is one of the most urgent issues facing health care today. The hospital is committed to embracing a "just culture" and encourages free and open communication in reporting errors and patient safety issues. Some of the ways the hospital has pushed patient safety to the forefront include:

- The hospital's Patient Safety Council helps staff members identify and resolve a wide range of patient safety concerns within the hospital. The council's monthly meetings are well attended, with an average 71 percent attendance rate. Frontline council members also make patient safety rounds to elicit errors and unsafe processes.
- The Patient Safety Council also chooses a Patient Safety Hero quarterly from variances that describe activities that prevent patient harm.
- The hospital has helped improve patient safety by implementing an electronic medical records system. This advanced system provides patients and their families with even faster service and enhanced patient safety.
- The "Speak Up" program encourages patients to come forward with any concerns that develop over the course of their treatment.
- Each year, all staff members receive the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's Patient Safety Survey. The results are then analyzed to provide insight into problem areas and to celebrate successes.

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