

CANADIAN PATIENT SAFETY WEEK

QUESTION & ANSWER BACKGROUNDER

Q1: What is Canadian Patient Safety Week (CPSW)?

A1: Canadian Patient Safety Week is Canada's only national campaign to raise awareness of patient safety and related programs and initiatives. The week started in 2005 and is now an annual event to keep the issue of patient safety foremost in the minds of Canadians. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute sponsors CPSW as part of its national mandate to build and advance a safer healthcare system for Canadians. It aims to share information about best practices in patient safety with providers, patients and their families.

Q2: When does CPSW occur?

A2: CPSW occurs the first week of November.

Q3: What is the theme of CPSW?

A3: The theme of CPSW is "Ask. Listen. Talk."

The tagline is *Good healthcare starts with good communication.*

Healthcare providers, patients, their families and the public are encouraged to not just think it, but say it – ASK questions, LISTEN to the answers, and TALK about any concerns you have.

Q4: What are the goals of CPSW?

A4: The goals of CPSW are to:

- **Raise awareness that patient safety is everyone's business.**
- **Share information about best safety practices and successful patient safety programs and ideas.**
- **Increase positive dialogue about patient safety among care providers, public and media.**
- **Increase the visibility of CPSW in Manitoba.**

Q5: Why do we need CPSW? What are the facts on patient safety in Canada?

A5: Did you know...

- **185,000 patients (or 7.5% of Canadians) admitted to hospital experience adverse events.***
- **70,000 (or 37%) admissions are considered *highly preventable*.***
- **The rate of adverse events in other countries ranges from 2.9-16.6 %.***
- **The most common types of adverse events are:**
 - **Events related to surgical procedures (34%).***
 - **Medication or fluid-related events (24%).***
- **The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) says:**
 - **One in 9 patients receives the wrong medication or wrong dose.**
 - **One in 9 adults contracts infection in hospital.**



- There are more deaths each year due to adverse events or preventable harm in Canadian hospitals than deaths from breast cancer, motor vehicle accidents and HIV combined.
- Between 9,000 and 24,000 people die each year from preventable harm in healthcare.
- Good healthcare starts with good communication. If something does not seem right, ask questions, listen to the answers and talk about your concerns.

* (Source: Baker & Norton Study. *Adverse Events in Canadian Hospitals*. 2004.)

Q6: Who Are the intended audiences?

A6: The message: *Ask. Listen. Talk.* is aimed at everyone – healthcare providers, patients, families and patient advocates. All of us have a responsibility to promote patient safety in our work settings, in our communities and with the public in general to make sure Canadians grasp the importance of patient safety and their role in it.

Q7: How can you help?

Q7: Everyone has a role to play in improving communication around patient safety.

You can:

- Encourage patients to ask more questions.
- Listen to make sure patients and their families understand what is said.
- Talk with co-workers about patient safety issues.
- Get your co-workers interested and involved in patient safety.
- Be a patient safety promoter/advocate.
- Lead by example and practise sharing knowledge.
- Visit the www.mips.ca and the www.asklistentalk.ca websites and use the tools and information posted online.
- Host a CPSW event. See the Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety's *CPSW Website Planners' Guide* for suggestions of potential activities and related resources.
- Include patient safety discussions at staff meetings.
- Use CPSW and *It's Safe to Ask* posters all year round to reinforce patient safety messages.