Beta-testing of the Medical Office Survey on Patient Safety (SOPS)

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Introduction

▪ Patient safety is a major issue facing medicine today, and little is known about the patient safety attitudes and practices among primary care physicians in the U.S.

▪ The Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) developed a patient safety survey for hospitals, which was successful in identifying patient safety attitudes and practices in major hospitals in the U.S.

▪ AHRQ then modified the instrument and tested it in a small sample of primary care practices.

▪ The **purpose** of this multi-network study was to assess the functionality of the instrument in a large national sample of primary care practices that are members of a local Practice-Based Research Network (PBRN).

Specific Aims

Specific Aims of this multi-network project were to:
1. Recruit 11 local and regional PBRN's (300 practices) to beta-test the Medical Office Survey on Patient Safety (SOPS) [Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, and Family Medicine].
2. Conduct Medical Office Background survey.
3. Follow-up online Qualitative Survey re barriers to and usefulness of survey.
4. Provide clinics with individualized practice report on patient safety practices in their office.

SOPS Investigators

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SOPS Practice Characteristics

• 11 local and regional networks participated in this study, beta-testing the SOPS instrument.

• 292 primary care PBRN practices

• Physician (MD, DO)	1,134	18%
• Midlevel Providers +	322	5%
• Admin. or clerical	1,721	28%
• Other clinical staff	1,391	23%
• Nursing *	918	15%
• Management	326	8%
• Other position	184	5%
• TOTAL	6,169	100%

• # Medical Offices	292	
• # Individual Surveys	6,463	
• # Surveys Given	8,710	
• Overall Response Rate	74%	
• Avg. # Surveys per Office	22	
• Avg. # Surveys Given	30	
• Avg. Office Response Rate	81%	

• Single specialty	153	53%
• Multispecialty, PC only	85	29%
• PC & Specialty care	53	18%

• Single Location	186	67%
• Multiple Locations	91	33%

• + physician assistant, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, nurse midwife, advanced practice nurse
• * RN, LVN, licensed practical nurse (LPN)

SOPS Key Findings

• **Teamwork**: clinicians and staff consistently reported excellent teamwork at most sites.
• **Training**: many staff reported that they did not feel that they were trained adequately for their assigned tasks.
• **Communication**: many staff reported they felt penalized for reporting errors, & policies to prevent errors were absent.
• **Work Pressure and Pace**: many staff reported that they were seeing too many patients to be followed safely.

Conclusions

● 1. The Medical Office Survey on Patient Safety is a useful tool for practice evaluation & practice self-improvement.

● 2. Clinicians and management should consider training programs for staff.

● 3. Communication skills for both clinicians and staff should be improved.

● **Next Steps**:

● 1. Needs Assessment re communication skills and necessary training.

● 2. Devise intervention strategy.

● 3. Test intervention in multinetwork setting.

Survey Items By Patient Safety Culture Area — Survey Item % Positive Response

Item

1. Teamwork

C1 — 1. When someone in this office gets really busy, others help out. — 82% / 84%

C2 — 2. In this office, there is a good working relationship between staff and providers. — 87% / 88%

C5 — 3. In this office, we treat each other with respect. — 79% / 81%

C13 — 4. This office emphasizes teamwork in taking care of patients. — 79% / 82%

5. Staff Training

C4 — 1. This office trains staff when new processes are put into place. — 75% / 75%

C7 — 2. This office makes sure staff get the on-the-job training they need. — 71% / 71%

C10R — 3. Staff in this office are asked to do tasks they haven't been trained to do. — 69% / 69%

7. Communication About Error

D7R — 1. Staff feel like their mistakes are held against them. — 57% / 57%

D8 — 2. Providers and staff talk openly about office problems. — 60% / 57%

D11 — 3. In this office, we discuss ways to prevent errors from happening again. — 77% / 81%

D12 — 4. Staff are willing to report mistakes they observe in this office. — 72% / 74%

12. Work Pressure and Pace

C3R — 1. In this office, we often feel rushed when taking care of patients. — 27% / 31%

C6R — 2. We have too many patients for the number of providers in this office. — 43% / 52%

C11 — 3. We have enough staff to handle our patient load. — 48% / 50%

C14R — 4. This office has too many patients to be able to handle everything effectively. — 57% / 62%

■ PBRN Medical Offices
■ Pilot Test Medical Offices

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%