



WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY 2026

Strengthening Patient Safety in NCD Services

"Safe care for life!"

What Is Patient Safety?



Patient safety is the reduction of avoidable harm and unnecessary risks associated with healthcare to an acceptable minimum.

“A world in which no one is harmed in healthcare, and every patient receives safe and respectful care, every time, everywhere.”
— WHO Global Patient Safety Action Plan (GPSAP) 2021–2030

WHO ESTIMATE

1 in 10

patients is harmed during healthcare,
globally

~50%

of this harm is considered preventable

NCDs: A Growing Patient Safety Challenge

Noncommunicable diseases are long-term conditions — cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, hepatic, neurological and genetic conditions.

COMMON RISK FACTORS



Tobacco Use



**Harmful
Alcohol Use**



Unhealthy Diet



**Physical
Inactivity**



Complexity increases the risk of safety incidents.

People living with NCDs often need **long-term care**, **multiple medications**, and **interactions with many parts of the health system**

Alongside the well-known **prevention** and public-health **interventions** dimensions, there is an equally important **patient safety** dimension.

Common Safety Problems in NCD Care



Diagnostic Errors

Delayed or mis-diagnosis



Medication Errors & Adverse Events

Polypharmacy and unsafe use of high-risk drugs like insulin, anticoagulants, opioids



Medical Device related & Radiotherapy Harm

Equipment failures; User mistakes; software bugs



Healthcare-Associated Infections

Nosocomial infections during repeated encounters



Care Fragmentation

Different specialists without unified communication result in gaps during transitions



Inadequate Monitoring

Lack of Follow-ups. Missed Adjustments, Ignored side effects result in Worsening disease/complications & drug toxicity



Insufficient Patient Engagement

Result in poor adherence & higher health risks often leading to Emergencies

Common Safety Problems in NCD Care

Cardiovascular disease management frequently involves high-alert medications such as anticoagulants, antiplatelet agents, and complications related to polypharmacy, particularly among older adults with multimorbidity



People living with **cancer** are vulnerable to delayed diagnosis, medication errors involving systemic anticancer therapies, radiotherapy and surgical errors, healthcare-associated infections related to immunosuppression, failures in monitoring treatment toxicity, and communication failures during complex multidisciplinary care and transitions across care settings

People with **diabetes** are vulnerable to insulin-related medical errors, delayed diagnosis, inadequate glycemic monitoring, failures in care transitions, and preventable episodes of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia

Patients with **chronic respiratory diseases** such as Asthma and COPD are at risk of delayed diagnosis, inappropriate inhaler selection or technique, errors involving corticosteroids and bronchodilators, preventable exacerbations, and healthcare-associated infections

WPSD 2026: Call for Multi-Stakeholder Action

Safe NCD care must be addressed across the full continuum of care — so that no one is harmed while receiving care for an NCD.



EVIDENCE-BASED LIFESTYLE INTERVENTIONS CAN PREVENT DISEASE, IMPROVE CONTROL, AND REDUCE TREATMENT COMPLEXITY



**Healthy
Nutrition**



**Physical
Activity**



**Smoking
Cessation**



**Adequate
Sleep**



**Stress
Management**

GPSAP: Recommended Action for Governments

The Global Patient Safety Action Plan sets out specific actions for key stakeholders.



Legislate & Regulate

- Mandatory quality accreditation and licensing frameworks: Statutes like CEA
- Independent double-checks to prevent misdiagnosis
- Mandating health facilities to document & track patient navigation
- Mandating standardized electronic prescriptions
- Strict Medical Device laws requiring routine maintenance
- Standardized biomedical monitoring for equipment like insulin pumps, dialysis machines, ventilators
- Legally restricting price of essential NCD medicines and cardiac/oncology implants
- Mandatory public smoking bans, marketing restrictions, heavy excise taxes, statutory limits on industrial trans-fats



Promote Equity

Help people identify and overcome barriers such as stigma, discrimination, and low health literacy

This empowers people living with NCDs to:

- Recognize safety risks early
- Manage their own care safely
- Identify warning signs that require action

GPSAP: Recommended Action for Healthcare Facilities & Services



Commitment toward Zero Avoidable Harm

- Align & Implement processes, practices and resources with patient-safety guidelines, protocols and SOPs
- Monitor progress and act on findings continuously



Engage Patients as Partners

- Shared decision-making with patients and families
- Structured, well-communicated care transitions
- Longitudinal monitoring



Invest in a capable health workforce

Training, supporting and retaining them with the competencies to deliver safe NCD care

Tackling NCDs is not just about managing long-term conditions — it is about *designing systems that are safer, more integrated, and more responsive* to the needs of those who use them.

*Safe NCD care must be **continuous, person-centered, primary healthcare-oriented, and co-produced with people** living with NCDs and communities.*

"Safe care for life!"



Thank You

Together, let us ensure safe care for every person living with an NCD — at every stage, in every setting.

World Patient Safety Day 2026 | 17 September | "Safe care for life!"