

**Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS) Network offers research road map to improve the safety of pediatric care**

*SPS, the nation's largest network dedicated to improving safety in children's hospitals, identifies a preview into the future of pediatric patient safety research*

JANUARY 23, 2019 -- Researchers and collaborators from the Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS) Network have outlined 24 research priorities for improving pediatric patient care safety, which is the prevention of errors or adverse effects to pediatric patients. These priorities are detailed in a study that has been published today in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Using multiple research methods, investigators gathered input from parents, clinicians and hospital leaders. Topics identified as most important included how hospitals use high reliability principles, create and improve their safety culture, communicate about patient care, and use early-warning systems to proactively detect and prevent patient decline.

"Children and children's hospitals have unique characteristics that may require different approaches to improve patient safety, and this study sets a research agenda for pediatric patient safety," said James Hoffman, Pharm.D., Chief Patient Safety Officer at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the study's first author.

Embracing concepts from high-reliability organizations, patient and family engagement and a culture of safety are the basic tenets of the SPS Network and of hospitals in general, but the research demonstrated that key stakeholders believe that more must be learned for pediatric institutions to become highly reliable in the delivery of healthcare in the long term.

These results should inform health system leaders and patient safety experts seeking to dedicate resources to the highest priority areas that will improve the safety of pediatric health care. Stakeholders that are best-positioned to determine high-priority issues, including parents, identified research priorities that could further improve success.

"Engaged parents helped us throughout the process, and their input was critical," said Nicholas Keeling another St. Jude author. "What we're left with is something pediatric healthcare organizations can review, employ to decide key areas of concern, and utilize to immediately begin their research into improving pediatric patient care."

The SPS Network includes more than 135 children's hospitals working together to eliminate serious harm across all children's hospitals.

"As a group, SPS Network hospitals care for about half of all hospitalized children each year," said senior author Kathleen Walsh, M.D., M.S., Associate Professor at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Director of Research in the hospital's James M. Anderson Center for Health Systems Excellence. "That means we are in the unique position to be able to have an immediate effect on pediatric patient safety."

Other authors include Christopher B. Forrest of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Heather L. Tubbs-Cooley, Erin Moore, Emily Oehler and Stephanie Wilson of Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; and Elisabeth Schainker of Franciscan Children's.

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