

# AHRQ Safety Program for Long-Term Care: CAUTI Safety Culture Results Discussion Guide



## How Can the Nursing Home Culture Survey Help My Facility?

Safety culture surveys are useful for measuring organizational conditions that can lead to adverse events and resident harm in the nursing home. These surveys can be used to:

- raise staff awareness about resident safety and why it is so important,
- assess the current status of the facility's safety culture,
- identify strengths as well as areas for improvement,
- evaluate the cultural impact of resident safety interventions and
- compare your facility findings with others.

Research conducted over the past two decades has shown that a strong safety culture has been linked to positive clinical and operational outcomes in healthcare, including a reduction in staff turnover.

## What is the Purpose of this Discussion Guide?

The purpose of this discussion guide is to help you and your team develop an action plan to improve one-two safety culture areas identified through your survey results. This guide is broken into six steps to be followed in the order provided. Some discussion questions are provided under each step.

## What Steps Do We Follow?

### Step One: **Attend the webinar, "Safety Culture Survey Results Forum: Tips, Tricks and Stories from the field"**

- This webinar provides guidance on how to use your own survey results to improve safety culture in your facility. An archived copy of this webinar can be found on the project website, [www.ltcsafety.org](http://www.ltcsafety.org).

### Step Two: **Preparations before the Team Discussions**

- Review the results sent to you by your Organizational Lead (OL) and contact your OL or an HRET staff member if you have any questions. Do this prior to meeting with your team.
- Communicate the importance of the meeting to all team members and try to schedule the meeting at a time when most team members can attend.
- Invite all members of the team from front-line staff to the administrative, physician and nursing champions.
- Hold the meeting in a room with a white board or one that contains flip charts to record key discussion points.
- Identify a team member to take notes during each discussion.
- Determine the length of the meeting and the number of steps you can realistically accomplish in one meeting. You will probably need at least two meetings to go through all the steps needed to develop your action plan. However, try not to allow more than a week or two to pass between meetings to discuss the safety culture results.

### **Step Three: Assemble the Team, Explain the Ground Rules and Set the Tone for the Work**

- Thank all of the staff for their participation in assessing the current resident safety culture by taking the safety survey!
- Explain the purpose of the meeting: to review results and discuss next steps.
- Describe what “safety culture” means and how it is measured.
- Cover the number of surveys that were completed and what percentage of staff participated. Regardless of the number of staff who completed the survey, these discussions about the safety culture survey and resident safety culture in general are nevertheless very important. If at least 60 percent completed the survey, explain that this information is a valid assessment.
- Validate the staff’s potential feelings of concern or awkwardness about openly discussing the results. Reassure staff that the goal is to learn about the facility’s strengths and areas for improvement.
- Start the meeting with a story of resident harm and spend a few minutes talking about your feelings associated with that harm.
- Discussion questions:
  - Who else knows of a situation in which a resident has been inadvertently harmed?
  - Would you be comfortable having your loved one in this nursing home?

### **Step Four: Review the Areas in which Your Facility is Doing Well**

- Start with the areas in which your facility is excelling. This step should take the least amount of time at your meeting; however, it is worthwhile to get the conversation going by asking the following questions.
- Discussion questions:
  - Why do you think we scored highly in these areas?
  - Did any of the results surprise you?

(Because your aim is to focus most of the meeting on steps five and six, do not spend more than a few minutes on this step.)

- Celebrate your successes!

### **Step Four: Review Areas in Need of Improvement & Reflect on Potential Solutions**

- Encourage the team to view the results with an open mind. Staff members need adequate time to reflect on why certain problem areas have appeared and what their potential solutions may be. This activity will help team members carefully assess all the areas in need of improvement and then help them narrow the list down to one or two safety culture priorities to address in the coming months.
- Discussion questions:
  - Did you expect these results?
  - Were any of the results surprising?
  - Have we begun to address solutions to any of these areas?
  - Do any of these areas have a common theme that might be addressed similar improvement approaches?
- The note taker should list the areas that the team identifies without judging staff choices.

### **Step Five: Pick 1-2 Areas for Improvement (or no more than 4)**

- Explain to the group that it is best to focus on one-two areas at a time, or no more than four.
- Further explain that the group should pick improvement areas based on potential impact on resident safety.
- As with step four, gathering the team’s insights on these one-two priorities will enhance the action plan, or help reveal the necessary next steps.

- Discussion questions:
  - What are your top two (or no more than four) improvement priorities?
  - Do you have thoughts on potential solutions?
  - Have we already begun to develop solutions for any of these areas? If not, what are some next steps we need to take before we can address certain areas?

If you have a large enough team, you can have each team member go up to the white board or flip chart and put a check mark next to their two top choices. The one-two areas with the most check marks will be selected for the action plan.

## Step Six: **Develop an Action Plan for Each Improvement Area**

- After deciding upon the one-two (or no more than four) areas to work on in the coming months, the team should develop an action plan for each area chosen.
- You may want to convene a focus group for each area before developing the action plan.
- Assign a staff member to champion each action plan who will ensure that the action plan is followed and that progress is reported to administration and the team.
- Monitor progress on each area regularly—ideally monthly and at a minimum quarterly.
- You may use whatever action planning tool you currently use; action planning templates are available on the Internet. Whichever template you use, you should document the following:
  - **What** actions or changes will occur in order to achieve the desired outcome
  - **Who** will carry out these actions and changes
  - **Who** will monitor whether these actions and changes are taking place
  - By **when** will the actions and changes occur
  - What **resources** are needed to carry out these actions and changes
  - How will progress on these actions and changes be **communicated** to team members and facility champions (administrative, physician and nursing)

## Additional Resources

- AHRQ Survey User's Guide to Nursing Home Survey on Patient Culture: :  
<http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/patientsafetyculture/nursing-home/>
- IHI White Paper: "Leadership Guide to Patient Safety"  
<http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/IHIWhitePapers/LeadershipGuidetoPatientSafetyWhitePaper.aspx>
- Florida Facility use of Culture of Safety <http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/patientsafetyculture/nursing-home/resources/barrontacall/barrontacall.pdf>