



## **Enhancing Patient Care: a practical guide to improving quality and safety in hospitals**

Alan Wolff and Sally Taylor. Published by [MJA books](#), 2009. ISBN 9780977578665. Contains 234 pages. Price AU\$49.95

When research found that death, disability, and prolonged hospital stay was often the outcome of medical treatment rather than the disease there was optimism that recognition of the problem would lead to effective control of medical errors and adverse events.



Some of the reasons why this did not occur are familiar to the Wimmera Health Care Group that faithfully pursued the patient safety improvement goals for 19 years.

Their efforts established a model that has now been adopted by many hospitals ranging from tertiary centres in capital cities to rural hospitals.

This book which is sub-titled as practical guide to improving quality and safety in hospitals is written by hands-on physicians, but it has a large reference base that provides explanations of organisational theory, and definitions for every aspect of risk management.

There are very detailed explanations of the components and processes required to build quality and safety into established systems that are resistant to change, but too little attention is given to the need for executive support and how to change a dysfunctional system.

An individual or institution seeking to better understand the complexity of the patient safety challenge will be well served by “Enhancing Patient Care” which should be available in every hospital library, because, as the authors conclude, inertia is probably the biggest obstacle to change, and taking effective action is up to individuals within organisations.

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