

## ESICM RELEASES FREE RESOURCES FOR A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO PATIENT SAFETY IN THE ICU

*On World Patient Safety Day, the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM) takes a stand on patient care.*

### AT A GLANCE

- Approximately 1 in 10 patients is harmed while receiving hospital care in high-income countries.
- 134 million adverse events are registered annually in low-resource settings, which in turn result in 2.6 million deaths.
- Globally, as many as 4 in 10 patients are harmed in primary and outpatient health care. Up to 80% of harm is preventable.
- According to the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the rate of medication errors in hospitals varies from 0.3% and 9.1% in prescription and from 1.6% to 2.1% in the dispensing stage.

BRUSSELS – [17 September, 2022] — Patient safety is critical to providing quality essential health care services, as patient harm due to adverse events is one of the world's 10 leading causes of death and morbidity [1].

WHO's World Patient Safety Day (WPSD) for 2022 aims to raise global awareness of "Medication Safety" and address the problem of medication errors, the most common adverse event in hospitals, accounting for one-third of all adverse events, peaking at 38% when considering intensive care units (ICUs) alone [2].

In fact, ICUs are particularly prone to medical errors, as they often involve multiple consultants, numerous medications and complex patient pathology. Several studies have reported that 15-50% of ICU patients are likely to suffer from an adverse event. Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated the risk of medication errors and associated medication-related harm.

To mark WPSD, the ESICM released a series of videos to raise awareness among intensivists worldwide of this global issue and the strategies to maximise patient safety. Topics include medical errors in the ICU and, in general, how to monitor patient safety in the ICU and include the perspective of families.

The Society has long advocated for involving patients and families in improving ICU standards of care and patient safety, as this can reduce the burden of harm by up to 15% [3]. "We are committed to better understanding the natural history of medical errors and identifying targets for improvements", says ESICM President-Elect

Élie Azoulay.

The resources are freely accessible on the [ESICM website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

ESICM is also part of the [European Collaborative Action on Medication Errors and Traceability \(ECAMET\)](#), a patient safety initiative which published a [white paper on the medication errors in the hospitals](#) in March this year. It emphasises the need to establish a culture of safety, create strategies to improve communication, raise awareness, and hold regular multidisciplinary training meetings, among other things.

ESICM's efforts do not end with these initiatives, as other projects and activities are currently in the pipeline and will be announced in due course.

[1] Jha AK. Presentation at the “Patient Safety – A Grand Challenge for Healthcare Professionals and Policymakers Alike” a Roundtable at the Grand Challenges Meeting of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 18 October 2018 (<https://globalhealth.harvard.edu/qualitypowerpoint>, accessed 23 July 2019).

[2] ECAMET. The Urgent Need to Reduce Medication Errors in Hospitals to Prevent Patient and Second Victim Harm. March 2022 (<https://ecamet.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ECAMET-White-Paper-Call-to-Action-March-2022-v3.pdf>)

[3] Slawomirski L, Auraaen A, Klazinga N. The Economics of Patient Safety in Primary and Ambulatory Care: Flying blind. Paris: OECD; 2018 (<http://www.oecd.org/health/health-systems/The-Economics-of-Patient-Safety-in-Primary-and-Ambulatory-Care-April2018.pdf>, accessed 23 July 2019).

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## **THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE**

*The European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM) supports and promotes the advancement of knowledge in intensive care medicine, in particular the promotion of the highest standards of multidisciplinary care of critically ill patients and their families through education, research and professional development.*

*For more information, visit our website [esicm.org](https://esicm.org). Follow [@ESICM](https://twitter.com/ESICM) or visit us on Facebook.*

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