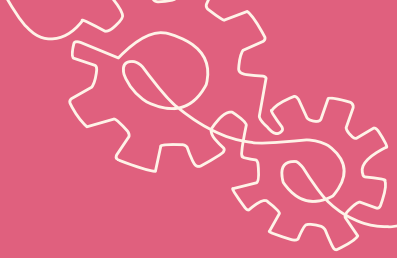


Systems approaches to patient safety incident investigations



This course is for:

Staff conducting any PSIRF learning responses requiring systems analysis

Learning objectives:

1. **Apply** systems thinking principles to understand patient safety incidents as the product of complex work system interactions rather than individual failures
2. **Use** the SEIPS (Systems Engineering in Patient Safety) model to examine how work happens in healthcare environments
3. **Identify** system conditions and influences that shape human performance, moving beyond hindsight bias and individual attribution
4. **Distinguish** between "work-as-imagined" and "work-as-done," recognising how everyday adaptations and workarounds reveal system design issues
5. **Plan and scope** a Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII) including developing appropriate Terms of Reference and investigation questions
6. **Lead** different types of PSIRF learning responses, selecting appropriate methods and depth of analysis based on learning needs
7. **Develop** sustainable safety recommendations and improvement actions that address system design rather than relying on individual behaviour change or increased monitoring
8. **Evaluate** proposed actions against criteria for sustainability, using the IFACES guidance in the safety action development guide
9. **Communicate** systems-based findings in ways that promote learning and improvement rather than defensiveness

Most patient safety incidents don't happen because individuals make inexplicable errors - they happen because well-intentioned, skilled people are working in systems not designed to support safe care. PSIRF requires us to fundamentally shift from asking "who made a mistake?" to "what conditions made this outcome more likely?" This session develops the systems thinking skills to conduct investigations that reveal meaningful learning and generate actions that actually stick.

Our approach:

Led by faculty with extensive experience conducting systems-based investigations and implementing PSIRF, this workshop balances conceptual understanding with hands-on practice. We use real case studies to demonstrate how systems thinking reveals different insights - and crucially, leads to different, more effective actions.

We recognise that shifting to systems thinking can feel uncomfortable, especially when organisations or families seek individual accountability. We'll explore how to maintain this approach while acknowledging the human need to understand what happened, and how Being Fair principles support both systems learning and appropriate accountability.

This session is practical, realistic, and honest about the challenges of implementing sustainable improvement in complex, resource-constrained healthcare systems. You'll leave with frameworks, tools, realistic strategies, and the confidence to conduct investigations that generate actions that actually make a difference.

Format: single day or 2 day - in person or online

