
Spotlight on: Hospital Español de México: The importance of a culture of safety



Mexico City's historic Hospital Español is the first International hospital to earn the Patient Safety Movement Foundation's prestigious five-star ranking. Their entry into the PSMF's five-star [Hospital Program](#) was officially announced at the 7th Annual World Patient Safety, Science & Technology Summit in January 2019.

Founded in 1842, Hospital Español is a 400-bed hospital located in Mexico City. Its 19-building campus includes more than 30 different specialty programs and is committed to clinical practice and education.

In 2003, Hospital Español formally began developing initiatives for making ongoing safety improvements, which led to a clearer understanding that medical errors are a product of human fallibility combined with dysfunctional systems. The hospital's administrators and staff regard patient safety as a cornerstone of medical care and are constantly engaged in implementing strategies focused on further improvements. Such strategies have allowed them to improve processes and the hospital's culture of patient safety.

The team at Hospital Español were introduced to the Patient Safety Movement Foundation in 2016 by Dr. Javier Davila. The hospital made its first commitment to Challenge 12A: Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism (VTE). It has since made commitments to all 18 APSS, joining CHOC Children's Hospital in Orange County, California, the University of California Irvine Medical Center, and Parrish Medical Center in Florida as the PSMF's five-star hospitals.

The medical team at Hospital Español understand the importance of developing a Culture of Safety, in which a healthcare organization strives to create a safe and reliable environment based on the foundation of transparency, trust, safety, and accountability. To that end, Hospital Español has developed a system of voluntary notification of adverse events, which it considers a pillar of its culture of safety. The notification system's goal is to ascertain how and why mistakes occur and to then establish strategies that address their root causes and make corrections accordingly to prevent future avoidable adverse events.

The main components of Hospital Español's culture of safety include

- An electronic notification mechanism for adverse events to facilitate access and timely notification of staff
- An open mechanism for all hospital staff to offer feedback on the results of the hospital's safety program
- The development and implementation of a "Just Culture" to eliminate any fear of retaliation for reporting an event
- Safety alert bulletins about preventable causes of serious harm, to inform and instruct all personnel
- A "second victim" program that provides psychological "first aid" to personnel involved in harm events
- Regular workshops that underline the importance of notifications, encouraging staff to report any potential source of patient harm
- A systemic approach to learning from errors that includes root cause analysis of any harm events.

Making the additional safety commitments through the PSMF complements and reinforces the safety actions that Hospital Español had already undertaken. Hospital Español wants patients receiving any kind of treatment to feel they can rely on the hospital's continuous commitment to offering risk-free care. For Hospital Español, one life lost is one life too many.

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