

Supporting conversations about patient safety in the home

Am I Safe?



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Home care is an essential component of an integrated health care system that enables individuals to remain safely in their homes with dignity, independence and quality of life. Building on the findings of the 2013 pan-Canadian report, *Safety at Home: A Pan-Canadian Home Care Safety Study* (Doran, Blais et al), the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI) co-hosted with the Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) an expert roundtable in June 2014 to identify actions, outcomes and next steps to advance safety in the home.

One of the actions identified at the roundtable was the need for resources to guide safety conversations between health care providers, patients and family carers. These conversations promote informed decision-making and care planning to minimize risk associated with the provision of care in the home setting. Utilization of these resources would result in the following outcomes:

- Increase patients and their carers¹ awareness and understanding of the importance of safety and the need to make informed decisions that consider elements of safety.
- Support health care professionals in their interactions and conversations with patients, specifically in the areas of safety, risk management in the home setting.
- Enable community organizations and disease-specific associations to facilitate conversations about patient safety.

As a preliminary step in the development of potential resources, the CPSI commissioned the CHCA to conduct an environmental scan of tools and resources available in Canada. The scan included care providers within the health care system in three targeted areas:

- Acute care discharge planning,
- Primary health care
- Home care service providers

Drawing on the findings of the environmental scan and E-Delphi consultation, the following framework and approach is recommended.

¹Carers, also referred to as caregivers or family caregivers, are individuals (family members, neighbours, friends and other significant people) who take on an unpaid caring role to support someone with a diminishing physical ability, a debilitating cognitive condition or a chronic life-limiting illness.