



Eilish McAuliffe, Professor of Health Systems
Roisin O'Donovan, PhD Scholar

UCD IRIS Centre,
School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems
University College Dublin

Psychological Safety

WHY UNDERSTANDING VOICE AND SILENCE BEHAVIOURS IS CRITICAL
TO STAFF AND PATIENT SAFETY.



1

Learning Objectives



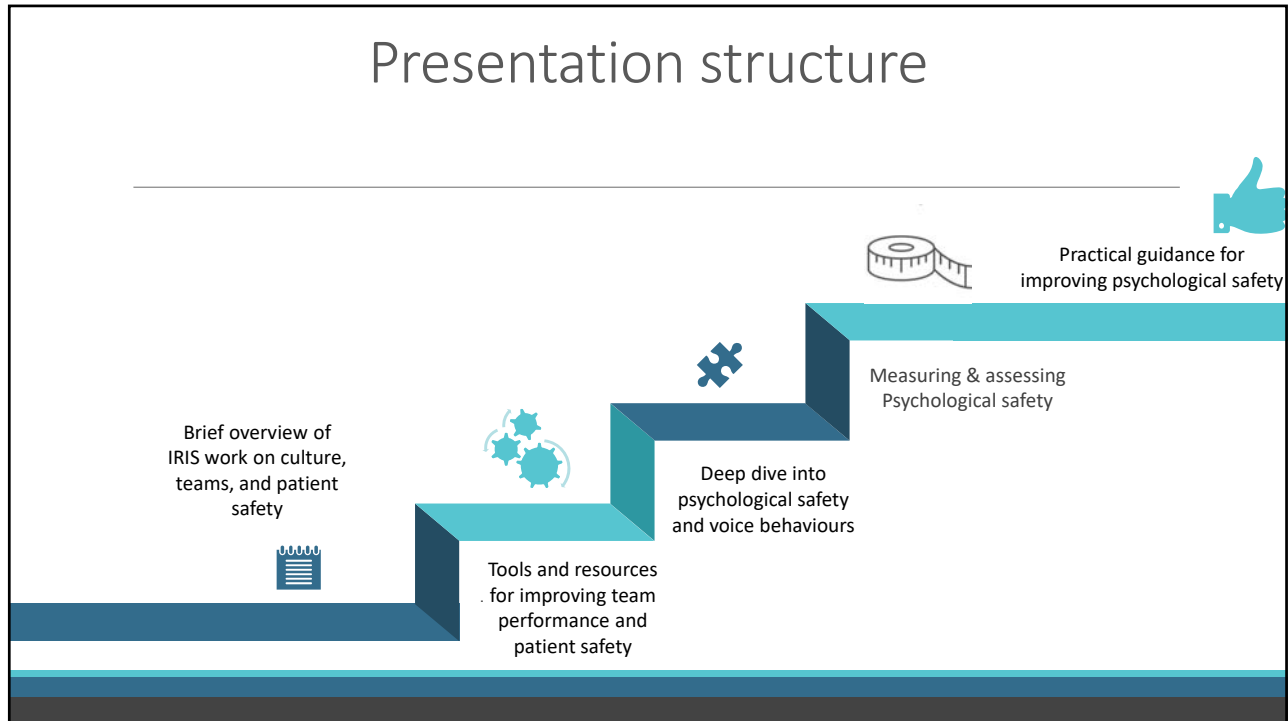
To deepen your understanding of psychological safety and its importance for staff and patient safety

To synthesise the learning on what has and hasn't worked in previous interventions to improve psychological safety

To provide practical guidance on improving psychological safety in healthcare settings.



2



3

Thinking Systems

Improving Health

Inspiring Change

IRIS
University College Dublin Centre for Interdisciplinary Research Education and Innovation in Health Systems

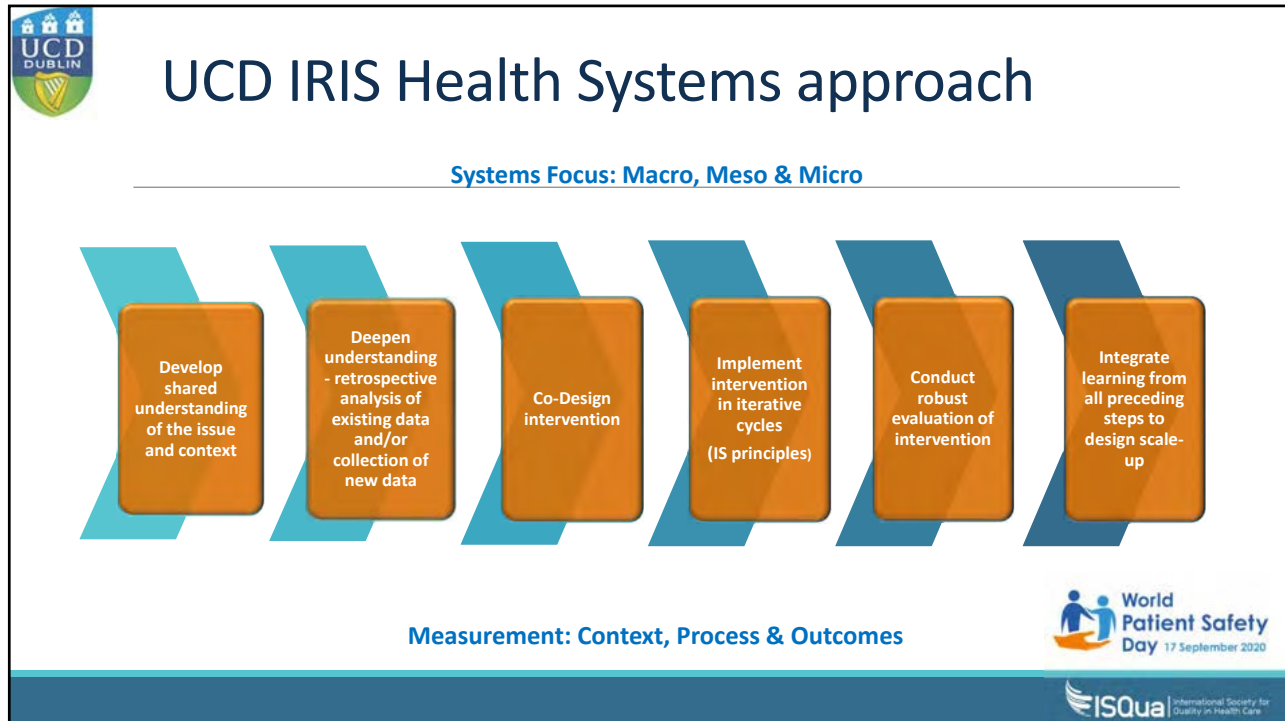
IMPACT

Generating Evidence
QUALITY & OUTCOMES
EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS
SENSE MAKING
ORGANISATION & CULTURE
COLLABORATION
INTERVENTION
EVALUATION
IMPLEMENTATION
EQUITY & ACCESS
TESTING
VALIDATION

World Patient Safety Day
17 September 2020

ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

4



5

Accountability for Patient Safety

The Premise

Encouraging a culture of openness and accountability needs to start from an understanding of the factors that make it difficult for doctors and other health professionals to be open about errors.

The Challenge

...But how do you get junior staff to talk about safety?

World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

6



The *PlayDecide* Safety Game

PlayDecide - versatile tool that allows you to create a serious discussion game about contentious issues.

Key elements:

- psychologically safe space;
- prime discussion with real stories that staff can relate to their everyday experience.
- information to raise awareness about patient safety issues
- developing understanding of shared responsibility for speaking up

www.patientsafetydiscussions.ie



7

Safety Cultures are supported by effective teamwork

- The central vehicle through which services are delivered
- At the heart of the organisational/system structure
- The intersection of expertise
- The key to sustainable improvement

Why focus on teams?



8

Collective Leadership for Safety Cultures

- Sharing and respecting values
- Identifying a common vision and purpose
- Working towards agreed goals (collective impact)
- Clarifying roles
- Harnessing collective intelligence
- Encouraging speaking up
- Supporting each other
- Improving team processes
- Utilising data to improve safety performance

The infographic is a grid of colored boxes with icons and text. The top row includes 'PERFORMANCE' (blue), 'UCD DUBLIN CO-LEAD CONTENT AREAS' (grey), and 'SUSTAINABILITY' (green). The middle row includes 'SAFETY CULTURES' (blue), 'TEAM PROCESSES' (green), 'PATIENT SAFETY' (yellow), and 'WELLBEING' (orange). The bottom row contains the website www.ucd.ie/collectiveleadership, the 'World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020' logo, and the 'ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care' logo.

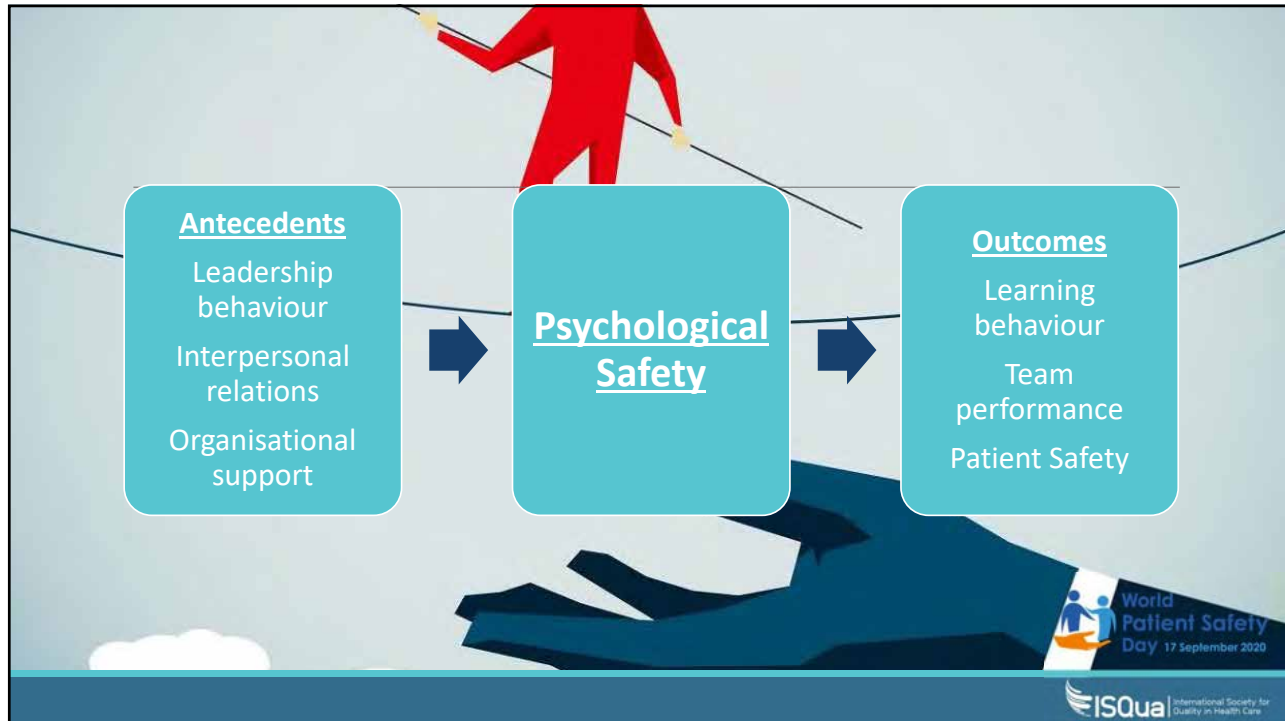
9



Psychological Safety: Defining and Understanding

The logo for World Patient Safety Day 2020, featuring a stylized figure and the text 'World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020'. Below it is the ISQua logo: 'ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care'.

10



11

Voice Behaviours

- Learning Behaviour
- Avoidance Behaviour

World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

12

Psychological Safety in Healthcare Teams

- “Teaming”
- Teamwork processes
- Quality Improvement



 World Patient Safety Day
17 September 2020

 ISQua | International Society for Quality in Health Care

13

Lack of Psychological Safety



Moore & McAuliffe, 2010; 2012; Edmondson, 2003

 World Patient Safety Day
17 September 2020

 ISQua | International Society for Quality in Health Care

14

How can Psychological Safety be Improved?



15



Review of Interventions to Improve Speaking up and Psychological Safety



16

Guidance for Intervention Development

- Levels involved
- Team members involved



17



Identifying Enablers of Psychological Safety in Healthcare Teams



18

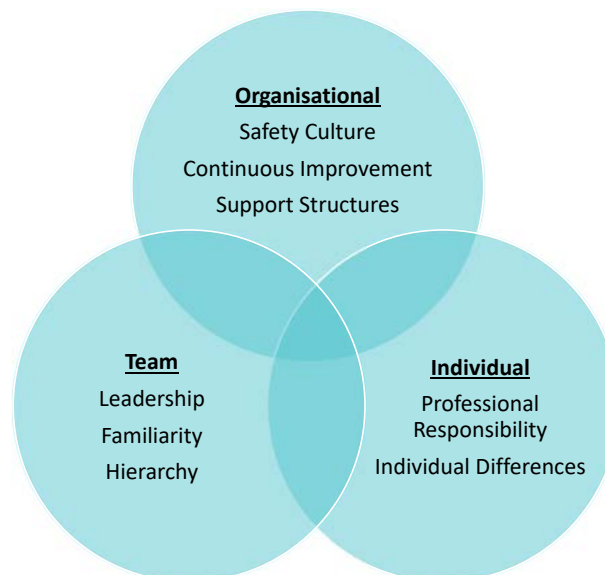
List of Practical Enablers

- ✓ Priority for Patient Safety
- ✓ Improving or Learning Orientation
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Familiarity
- ✓ Status, Hierarchy and Inclusiveness



19

A Systems Approach



20

Priority for Patient Safety

- Psychological safety ↔ Safety Culture
- Leader Behavioural Integrity



 World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

21

Support

- Organisational, Leadership and Peers
- Familiarity



 World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

22

Status, Hierarchy and Inclusiveness

➤ Inclusive Leadership



Weiss et al., 2018; O'Leary, 2016



23

Individual Differences

Gender and Personality



Atwal et al., 2005; Martinez et al., 2015; Law & Chan., 2015



24



Understanding the Complexity and Nuance of Psychological Safety in Healthcare Teams: An Adapted Measure


 World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020


 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

25

Mixed Methods Study

- Survey
- Observations
- Interviews

 World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

26

Speaking Up About Conflict



27

Support

- Leadership Vs Peer Support
- Influenced by Time Together



World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2020

ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

28

Nuance and Complexity of Psychological Safety

Team Level Vs Individual Level

Variation in Individual's Experience

- Personal characteristics
- Individual Beliefs
- Past Experiences



29

Individual Characteristics

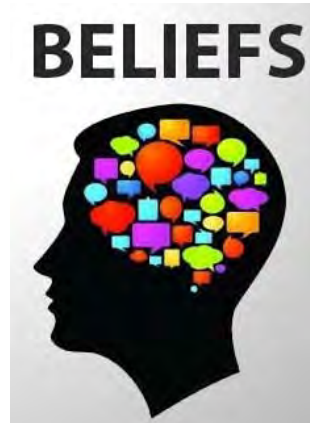
- “that’s just the way I am”
- Independent from team leader behaviour



30

Individual Beliefs

- Being valued
- Issue being appropriate or relevant



31

Past experiences

- Developing or Damaging Trust
- An act of vulnerability (Edmondson & Lei, 2014)
- Challenge: moving on from negative historical dynamics



32

Building Trusting Relationships

- Respectful, open and direct communication
- Inclusive Behaviour
 - Proactive inquiry (Edmondson, 2018)
- Co-Lead Intervention
 - Emotional Support




 World Patient Safety Day
 17 September 2020


 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

35

Individual Level

- Making a meaningful difference
- Clearly established roles
 - Team goals
 - Role clarity
- Team Norms
 - Listening
 - Asking Questions




 World Patient Safety Day
 17 September 2020


 ISQua International Society for Quality in Health Care

36

Conflict and Sensitive Issues

- Shared Mental Models
 - Professional Boundaries
 - Conflict

- Safe Spaces

- Play Decide Serious Game
 - Real world patient safety events
 - Shared consensus



37

Next Steps....



38

Links to Open Access Materials

Co-Lead Toolkit

<https://www.ucd.ie/collectiveleadership/resourcehub/toolkit/>

PlayDecide Game

<http://www.patientsafetydiscussions.ie/>



39


References

- Edmondson AC. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: how team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6): 1419-52.
- O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2020). Exploring psychological safety in healthcare teams to inform the development of interventions: combining observational, survey and interview data. *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1), 1-16.
- O'Donovan, R., Van Dun, D., McAuliffe, E. (2020) Measuring Psychological Safety in Healthcare Teams: Developing a More Accurate and Nuanced Mixed-methods Approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 20(1), 1-17
- O'Donovan, R & McAuliffe, E. (2020). A systematic review of factors that enable psychological safety in healthcare teams. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 32(4), 240-250
- O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2020). A systematic review exploring the content and outcomes of interventions to improve psychological safety, speaking up and voice behaviour. *BMC Health Services Research*, 20(1), 1-11.
- Moore L, McAuliffe E. To report or not to report? Why some nurses are reluctant to whistleblow. *Clin Gov*. 2012;17(4):332-42.
- Moore L, McAuliffe E. Is inadequate response to whistleblowing perpetuating a culture of silence in hospitals? *Clin Gov*. 2010;15(3):166-78.
- Weiss M, Kolbe M, Grote G et al. We can do it! Inclusive leader language promotes voice behavior in multi-professional teams. *Leadersh Q* 2018;29:389-402.
- O'Leary DF. Exploring the importance of team psychological safety in the development of two interprofessional teams. *J Interprof Care* 2016;30:29-34.
- Law BYS, Chan EA. The experience of learning to speak up: a narrative inquiry on newly graduated registered nurses. *J Clin Nurs* 2015;24:1837-48.



40

IRIS publications –teams, psychological safety and patient safety



Anjara SG, Ní Shé É, O'Shea M *et al.* Embedding collective leadership to foster collaborative inter-professional working in the care of older people (ELECTIC): Study protocol [version 1; peer review: 2 approved]. *HRB Open Res* 2020, 3:8 (<https://doi.org/10.12688/hrbopenres.13004.1>)

Cunningham, U., Ward, M. E., De Brún, A., McAuliffe, E. (2018). Team interventions in healthcare, a systematic search of the literature using realist synthesis, *BMC Health Services Research*, 18(1), 536. doi: 10.1186/s12913-018-3331-3 Available: <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-018-3331-3>

De Brún, A. & McAuliffe, E. (2020). Exploring the building blocks of collective leadership in a newly established hospital group using social network analysis. *Journal of Health Organisation and Management*, in press, doi: 10.1108/JHOM-12-2019-0353.

De Brún, A. & McAuliffe, E. (2020). Identifying the context, mechanisms and outcomes underlying collective leadership in teams: Building a realist programme theory. *BMC Health Services Research* 20, 261.

De Brún, A., O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2019). Interventions to develop collectivistic leadership in healthcare settings: a systematic review. *BMC Health Services Research*, 19(1), 72.

McAuliffe, E., De Brún, A., Ward, M., O'Shea, M., Cunningham, U., O'Donovan, R., McGinley, S., Fitzsimons, J., Corrigan, S., & McDonald, N. (2017). Collective Leadership and Safety Cultures (Co-Lead): Protocol for a pilot evaluation of the impact of a co-designed collective leadership intervention on team performance and safety culture in Ireland. *BMJ Open*, 7 (11) 1 Nov.



O'Donovan R, McAuliffe E. A systematic review exploring the content and outcomes of interventions to improve psychological safety, speaking up and voice behaviour. *BMC Health Services Research*. 2020;20(1):1–11.

O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2020). A systematic review of factors that enable psychological safety in healthcare teams. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 32(4), 240-250

Ward M, McAuliffe E, Ní Shé É, et al Imbuing medical professionalism in relation to safety: a study protocol for a mixed-methods intervention focused on trialling an embedded learning approach that centres on the use of a custom designed board game, *BMJ Open* 2017;7:e014122. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2016-014122


Ward, M, Ní Shé, E, Brún, A, Korpos, C, Hamza, M, Burke, E, Duffy, A, Egan, K, Geary, U, Holland, C, Grady, J, Robinson, K, Smith, A, Watson, A, McAuliffe, E. (2019) The co-design, implementation and evaluation of a serious board game 'PlayDecide Patient Safety' to educate junior doctors about patient safety and the importance of reporting safety concerns. *BMC Medical Education*, Jun 25;19(1):232. doi: 10.1186/s12909-019-1655-2

Ward, M., De Brún, A., Beirne, D., Conway, C., Cunningham, U., English, A., Fitzsimons, J., Furlong, E., Kane, Y., Kelly, A., McDonnell, S., McGinley, S., Monaghan, B., Myler, A., Nolan, E., O'Donovan, R., O'Shea, M., Shuhaiber, A., & McAuliffe, E. (2018). Using Co-Design to Develop a Collective Leadership Intervention for Healthcare Teams to Improve Safety Culture. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(6). doi:10.3390/ijerph15061182 Available: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29874883>





41



Please complete our Survey Experiences of teamworking in healthcare during COVID-19 pandemic



<https://tinyurl.com/UCDcolead>



Thank you

42