



National Institutes of Health  
*Clinical Center*

# Patient Safety and Quality: Nursing as a Partner in Achieving High Reliability

**Gwenyth R. Wallen, PhD, RN**  
**Chief Nurse Officer**  
**NIH Clinical Center**

# The Changing Landscape in Patient Safety and Quality

- Nursing has had a seat at the table but our voice is stronger.
- We are beginning to speak a common language with our interdisciplinary colleagues and each other when it comes to safety and quality.
- Morning safety huddle started with Dr. Gallin has continued to change our culture.
- Unit-based quality patient safety groups are improving interdisciplinary staff engagement in improvements.



# The Changing Landscape in Patient Safety and Quality continued...

- A better understanding about the role nurses play in achieving a high reliability organization in both the Clinical Center and Institutes and Centers is taking shape.
- Improving processes through the realignment of the Department of Perioperative Medicine and the Interventional Radiology Nurses under the Nursing Department.
- Understanding why we strive for zero CLABSI and 100% knowledge-based medication administration (KBMA) and how we get there.
- More timely follow-up to occurrence reporting facilitated by STARS and a new culture around being a HRO.



# Room for Growth

- Develop a roadmap to adopt Six Sigma principles.
- Engage systems engineers to build capacity for developing interdepartmental efficiencies across transitions of care.
- Increase efforts for better communication between institutes and clinical center nurses to anticipate the clinical requirements for protocols.
- Further alignment of clinical nurses outside of the Clinical Center Nursing Department.
- Our journey to Pathways to Excellence and then Magnet Status.

