



PATIENT SAFETY IN THE ICU: THE VIENNA DECLARATION

We, the Leaders of the Societies representing the medical field of Intensive Care Medicine, met in Vienna on 11 October 2009. Together with the representatives of the main institutions and stakeholders who speak up for patient safety, we declare...

1

We recognize that patient and Healthcare team safety is of paramount importance to every practicing health professional and represents one of the major challenges in modern day medicine. This affects the lives of women, men, and children in every country. Without a safe environment it is not possible to provide the quality of care that we all aspire to. This is especially true in Intensive Care Medicine, given the very fragile nature of the patients we care for, often in the extremes of age, unconscious and with minimal margins for error imposed by their deranged physiology. This global problem requires a global solution.

2

We believe that improving levels of safety for critically ill patients is achievable in all units and in all countries, irrespective of the available resources. If the safety of our patients is increased, then the quality of care that we can provide will improve.

3

We strongly believe that increasing patient safety is as crucial to the development of medical practice as the increase in the effectiveness of our interventions.

4

We have today therefore pledged to do whatever is necessary to:

- Increase the knowledge of the causes and reasons for failures to provide a safe environment in the Intensive Care Unit.
- Improve our understanding of the consequences of failure to provide a safe environment for critically ill adult and children and the health care professionals caring for these patients.
- Develop and promote criteria that can assess safety in the intensive care unit.
- Further our ability to translate the knowledge of safety into improving the quality of care that can be provided to our patients.

By acting together to fulfill these pledges we will improve the safety of intensive care practice and thereby increase the quality of care.

5

Through the design and promotion of safer and even more efficient devices and drugs, we acknowledge that industrial partners have a pivotal role to play in improving patient safety. With the signature of this declaration, manufacturers of biomedical, pharmaceutical and biotech companies pledge to:

- Engage in efforts to improve the safety profile of their products.
- Provide resources to facilitate the safe use of their products.
- Release, as soon as they are established, all the relevant information related to safety concerns of their products to healthcare professionals and regulatory agencies.

The agreements reached today will enable us to develop safety criteria that can be used by Intensive Care Units around the world to improve their safe practices and increase the quality of care provided to the benefit of all of our patients.