

**SPECIAL PAPER**

**Patient Safety and Healthcare Quality**

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:** Due to a variety of circumstances and world-wide research findings, patient safety and quality care during hospitalization have emerged as major issues. Patient safety deficits may burden health systems as well as allocated resources. The international community has examined several proposals covering general and systemic aspects in order to improve patient safety; several long-term programs and strategies have also been implemented promoting the participation of health-related agents, and also government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

**Aim:** Those factors that have negative correlations with patient safety and quality healthcare were determined; WHO and EU programs as well as the Greek health policy were also reviewed.

**Method:** Local and international literature was reviewed, including EU and WHO official publications, by using the appropriate keywords.

**Conclusions:** International cooperation on patient safety is necessary in order to improve hospitalization and healthcare quality standards. Such incentives depend heavily on establishing world-wide viable and effective health programs and planning. These improvements also require further steps on safe work procedures, environment safety, hazard management, infection control, safe use of equipment and medication, and sufficient healthcare staff.

**Keywords:** safety culture, patient safety, health service quality, quality assurance