

How-to guide

The cost of inadequate training: How to improve patient safety



The human cost: Highlighting the significance of training

How do you solve a problem that often involves vulnerable people, can cost lives, can increase the stress of healthcare staff and lead to legal ramifications?

In 2023, the US Joint Commission's [Sentinel Event Data report](#) showed that **36% of serious adverse events in hospitals involved issues with staff competency or training**. There are more studies and evidence that show a clear link between inadequate training and patient safety risks. The ripple effect of inadequate compliance training extends beyond the patient's harm. It also leads to increased staff stress and burnout, staff morale and job satisfaction, and even legal implications for healthcare organizations.

The silver lining here is that the problem is diagnosed and there is a solution. Avoiding unnecessary patient harm is a global problem. [The Imperial College of London](#) reported that in previous years there were between 19,800 and 32,200 cases of "probably avoidable" harm to patients in primary care. The clinical negligence claims as the result of those incidents amounted to £7.9 billion.

36%

of serious adverse events in hospitals involved issues with staff competency or training

Joint Commission's Sentinel Event Data report

[Read the report](#)





Medical errors and impact on staff

While professionals strive to deliver the best possible care, the complexity of procedures, individual patient variations, and human error can sometimes lead to unintended consequences.

Common causes of medical errors:

- **Poor communication:** A leading factor to misunderstandings and errors in care delivery.
- **Staffing shortages and burnout:** Can increase the workload for healthcare professionals, leading to fatigue and compromised patient care.
- **Lack of standardization:** Variability in clinical procedures leads to inconsistencies in care delivery and increases the risk of errors.
- **Technology failures:** Dependence on electronic health records (EHRs) and medical devices introduces the risk of technology-related errors.

Effect of medical errors on staff:

- **Emotional toll:** Healthcare professionals may experience feelings of guilt, shame, and distress following a medical error, leading to emotional burnout and decreased job satisfaction.
- **Professional repercussions:** Errors can lead to damage to personal reputation, loss of trust from patients, and potential legal ramifications.
- **Impact on morale:** Medical errors can undermine team morale and cohesion, eroding trust and collaboration among healthcare professionals.

Top 10 Leading Reviewed Sentinel Event Types (CY2022)

Event Types	N	% of Total
Fall	611	42%
Delay in treatment	89	6%
Unintended retention of a foreign object	88	6%
Wrong surgery*	85	6%
Suicide	73	5%
Assault/rape/sexual assault/homicide	60	4%
Fire/burns	49	3%
Perinatal event	33	2%
Self-harm	30	2%
Medication management	30	2%

*Wrong surgery includes wrong site, wrong procedure, wrong patient, and wrong implant.

[The Joint Commission Sentinel Event Data 2022 Annual Review](#)

The power of effective learning & training

Improved patient outcomes

- ✔ **Reduced medical errors:** Studies have shown that comprehensive training can decrease preventable mistakes, leading to improved patient safety, faster recoveries, and reduced risk of readmissions.
- ✔ **Enhanced patient satisfaction:** Well-trained healthcare professionals are better equipped to communicate effectively, provide compassionate care, and address patient concerns.
- ✔ **Increased confidence and competence:** Effective training equips healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs confidently and effectively.
- ✔ **Enhanced efficiency and productivity:** Well-trained staff can perform tasks more efficiently, reducing waste and improving overall productivity. This translates to cost savings and allows healthcare organizations to allocate resources more effectively.

Empowered staff and a thriving workforce:

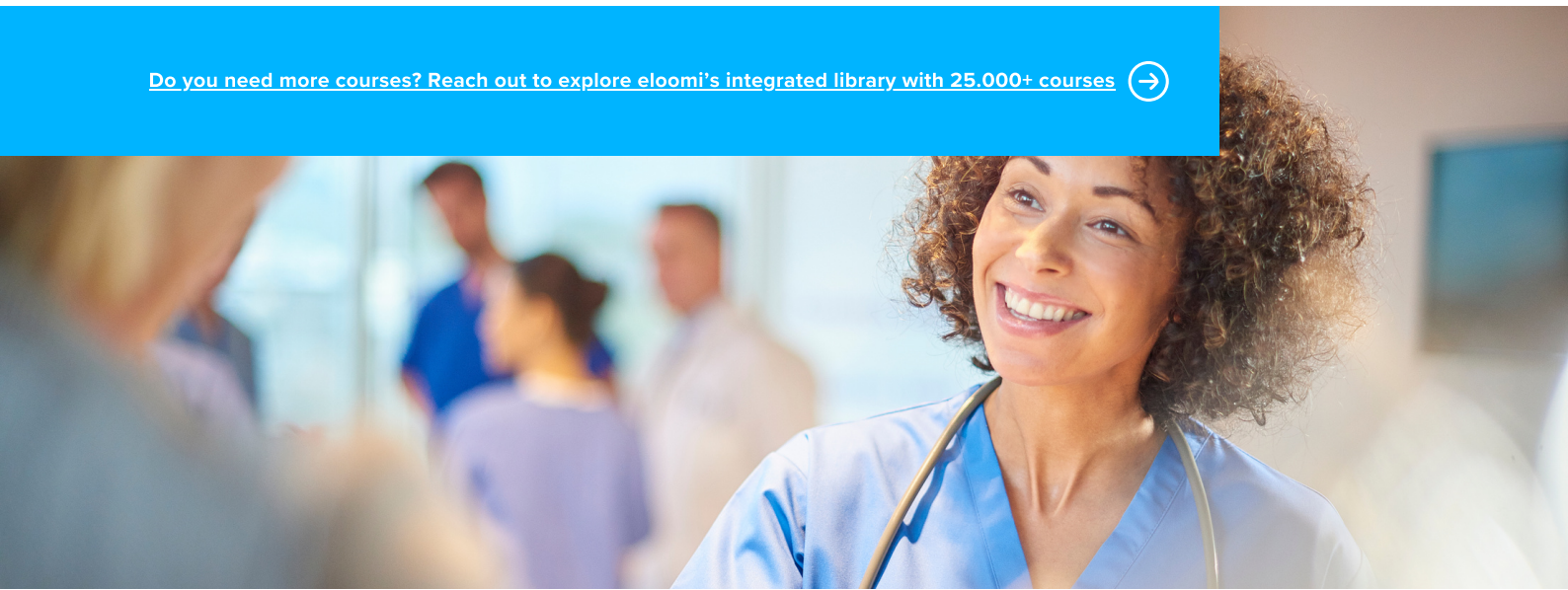
- ✔ **Improved compliance and regulatory adherence:** Training programs that align with best practices and regulatory requirements lead to a safer and more ethical work environment for all.
- ✔ **Positive organizational culture:** Investing in training demonstrates an organization's commitment to its employees' professional development. This fosters a culture of learning, collaboration, and continuous improvement, attracting and retaining top talent.
- ✔ **Reduced staff turnover:** When healthcare professionals feel valued and invested in, they are less likely to leave their jobs. This reduces recruitment and training costs while ensuring consistent high-quality care for patients.



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- ✓ Psychological safety
- ✓ Essential compliance
- ✓ Healthcare Infection Prevention
- ✓ Patient and Workplace Safety Measures in Healthcare
- ✓ Minimize Workplace Related Injuries in Healthcare
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Conclusion

Improve patient safety with better training

Through open communication, standardized practices, and a culture of continuous learning, healthcare organizations can mitigate the risks of medical errors and ensure the delivery of safe, high-quality care.

The message is clear: prioritizing learning and training is not just an option, it's an imperative. By adopting the tactics outlined in this ebook, healthcare organizations can take concrete steps toward a safer tomorrow:

- Identify crucial training areas to maximize impact.
- Adopt engaging content to keep staff motivated and ensure knowledge retention.
- Promote ongoing skill development to foster continuous improvement and a culture of learning.
- Implement robust monitoring and evaluation measures of the effectiveness of training.



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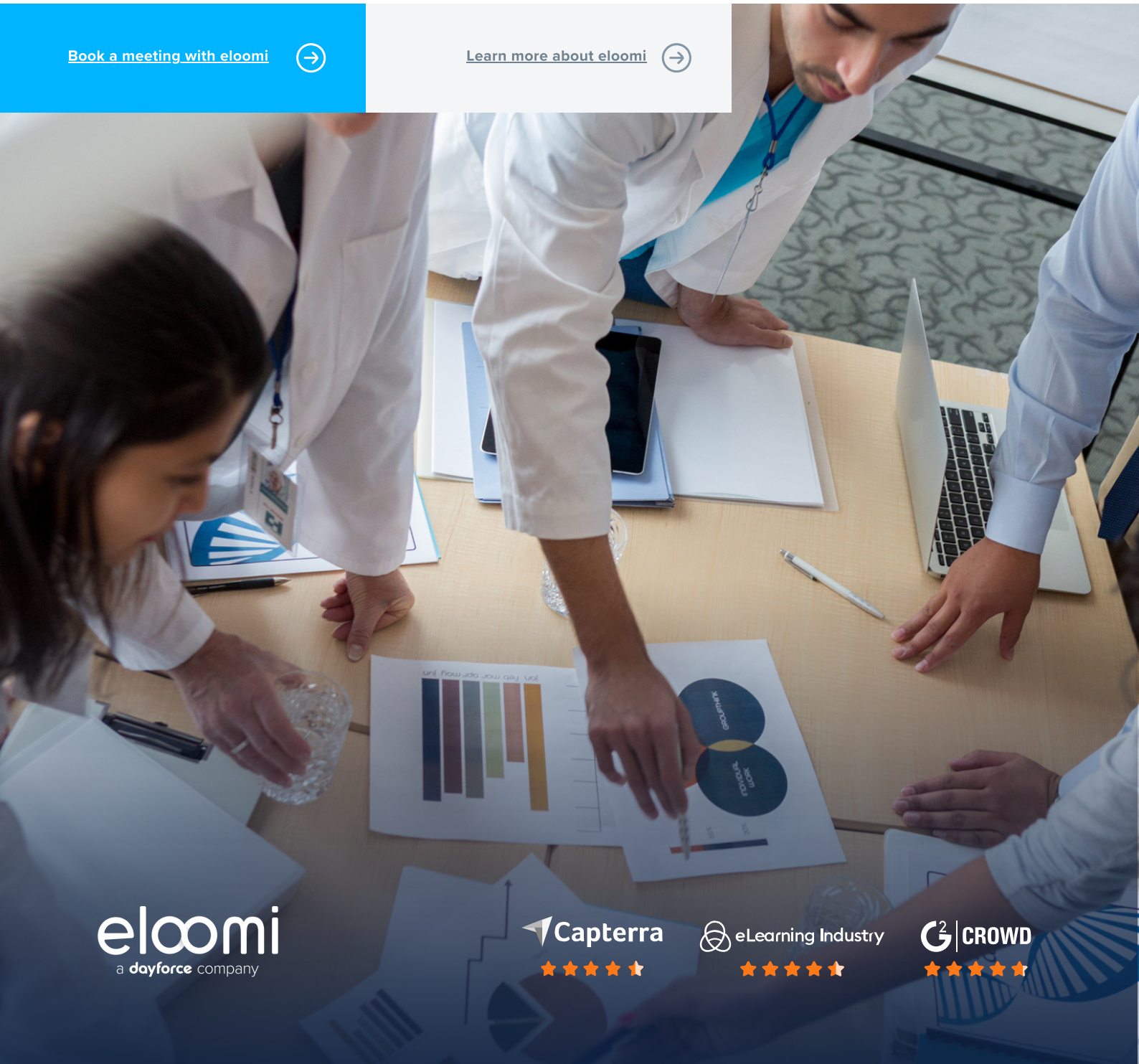
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