

Hospital Safety Event Reporting Playbook



Safety Event Reporting: Why Is This Important?

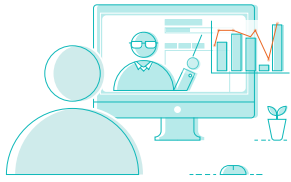
Implementing an effective safety event reporting system is a vital strategy for any hospital seeking to enhance safety and decrease risks. These systems help quality, safety, risk management, and other teams efficiently document, manage, and analyze safety events. They also support a culture of continuous safety improvement by helping staff, clinicians, and leadership identify safety gaps within key departments and across the enterprise.

But not every safety event reporting system is equally effective. This guide is designed to help your hospital evaluate solutions and find an innovative system that empowers your staff and protects your patients. Here, you'll find the critical features and functions that make up a strong safety event reporting system.



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Integration, Implementation, and Training

Your hospital's safety event reporting system should never become a burden for employees or IT staff. Seamless integration, easy implementation, comprehensive training, and timely support are key.

1 Integration

The system should integrate with your EMR and HR systems, and it should be able to leverage multiple types of data—including patient demographics, medication orders, pharmacy orders, and lab results.

2 Configurability

The system should adapt to your processes and workflows, providing customized event forms and enabling automated notifications and communication processes that align with your desired workflows.

3 Security

The system should adhere to current industry security standards, including data encryption in transit and at rest, role-specific privileges, compliance with third-party security attestations, and providing security audit reports. It should also undergo vulnerability and penetration testing multiple times per year from a reputable outside firm.

4 Accessibility

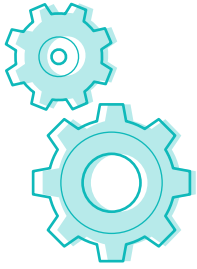
The system should be accessible via approved mobile devices, and it should support mobile viewing without requiring an app download. That way, staff can easily document and review events when they are connected to the hospital network.

5 Training

The system's training program should include live training and on-demand modules to ensure optimal use by existing staff and new staff. Role-based training should be provided to administrators (who manage and oversee the event reporting process) and investigators (who investigate events). Training materials should also be available to reporters (hospital staff who report safety events), so everyone can report events appropriately.

6 Support

The system should provide a healthcare-experienced service and support team, including a main point of contact that rapidly responds to inquiries and requests. This contact should answer questions; assist with building custom forms, charts, and reports; and help explore additional capabilities when new needs arise.



Automated Event Detection

Automated event detection reduces the likelihood of a missed safety event, ensures a faster response, and decreases time spent entering data.

1 Automated identification

The system should leverage automatic safety event detection to provide a comprehensive capture of safety events that are occurring, potentially increasing capture of those events healthcare workers are most resistant to reporting. Automated detection results in fewer missed or unreported events for reasons such as staff forgetting to report, staff not reporting due to fear of punitive action, or staff failing to report in a timely manner. To enable this functionality, the system must be able to monitor EMR data—including data related to patient demographics, medication orders, medication administrations, lab results, radiology notes, and vital signs—and trigger events based on hospital-defined criteria.

2 Automated alerts

The system should enable the implementation of automated event routing or notifications when certain events are detected, providing opportunities for real-time conversations between safety team members and front-line workers.

Automated Event Detection In Action

The event reporting platform should use several criteria for automatic detection. For example, if the following criteria are met for Narcan, it should document a safety event automatically:

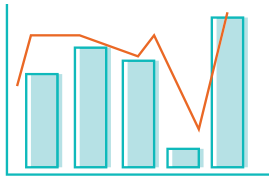
1. The administration of Narcan in a patient who recently received morphine.
2. The patient has evidence of respiratory depression via a decrease in respiratory rate or oxygen saturation.
3. The patient is not currently located in a procedural area where the use of Narcan is more routine.



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Hospitals increasingly recognize that they must find ways to intervene more quickly when safety events occur. The longer the delay in intervention, the more likely it is a similar event will occur again. **Automated event detection and alerts keep patients safer because hospitals can intervene faster.”**

—Karen Biesack,
Senior Quality and Safety Specialist
VigiLanz



Event Reporting

Customizable reporting forms, pre-populated data, and intelligent fields minimize time spent capturing events and enhance reporting accuracy.

1 Configurable forms

The system should provide forms tailored to your organization upon implementation, with the ability to make customizations as needed. This ensures it can quickly meet evolving needs and requirements.

2 Mandatory form fields

The system should enable easy configuration of mandatory fields within reporting forms, ensuring no critical information is missed.

3 Anonymous reporting

The system should have the option to enable anonymous reporting for all events or for specific types of events. This reduces the risk of undocumented events due to concerns among staff about punitive action.

4 Auto-populated demographic data

The system should automatically populate form fields with relevant patient and staff data to streamline reporting and enhance accuracy. Forms should take no more than five minutes to complete.

5 Intelligent field population

The system should dynamically adjust which fields are visible in the form as reporters enter information—creating a more intuitive, streamlined process to enter event details. For example, the “Name of Provider Notified” field should only appear after the user indicates that “Yes,” a provider was notified.

6 Smart logic

The system should use smart logic and analytics for keyword recognition to detect words and phrases and then associate them with a standardized table of risk terms. This enhances accuracy and grants visibility to key risk factors within the organization.

7 Attachments

The system should enable reporters to attach files—such as photos, videos, pdfs, audio, and more—to forms. This ensures all supporting information can be included with the event, and makes it easy for administrators to access it when needed.

8 Location- and facility-specific tags

The system should include a searchable location feature that makes it easy for reporters to associate events with specific facilities and locations. This streamlines reporting and enhances accuracy.



Event Communication

Strong safety event communication ensures gaps are identified and addressed as quickly as possible—and that no information slips through the cracks.

1 Automated event routing

The system should automatically assign safety events to pre-defined investigators based on location, event type, and severity, as well as issue automated email notifications. This streamlines workflows and supports timely investigations.

2 Automated email confirmation

The system should send automated email confirmations to users who complete reports so they know the event is being handled and investigated.

3 Automated event escalation

The system should automatically escalate events based on customized alert thresholds and protocols to ensure your investigation guidelines are consistently followed. Automated event escalation should also inform safety investigators when the timeframe for investigating a case has expired or is nearing expiration. Escalations should also be sent to reporters and managers when cases are saved but not submitted or when serious event classifications are entered.

4 Communication templates

The system should provide predefined email templates for notifying relevant team members about events. This streamlines and automates workflows.

5 Automated delivery of scheduled reports

The system should have the capability of automating scheduled report delivery for authorized users, creating efficiencies and saving time.

“ Identifying patient safety opportunities is a fundamental first step to preventing harm and improving patient care, which is why hospitals promote safety event reporting.”

—James Hoffman
PharmD, Chief Patient Safety Officer
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital



Event Analysis and Investigation

In order to foster continuous safety improvements, the system should make it easy to analyze and investigate safety event data.

1 Analysis tools

The system should use event analysis tools to convert health data into intelligence that provides greater visibility into trends and gaps – helping leaders prioritize safety and quality initiatives and drive change. Tools should include timelines, cause mapping, solution maps, fishbone diagrams, the five whys, and gaps analysis. Additional review features should include options to create sentinel event reports, root cause analysis, and Joint Commission reporting forms as well as to perform peer review.

2 Action plans and results

The system should enable users to define event action plans and assign tasks to others, as well as the ability to measure the effectiveness of the action.

3 Report tracking

The system should enable certain users to review reported events, including current status and any details surrounding action plans.

4 Personalized dashboards

The system should enable certain users to create personalized dashboards based on their needs (i.e., the data and charts most meaningful to them), and provide comprehensive graphical executive dashboards with presentation-ready visualizations. This makes it easy to share information with relevant individuals, departments, and leadership.

5 Enterprise-level reports

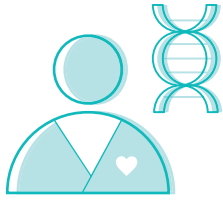
The system should enable users to create and export tables, pivots, and charts to analyze data across the enterprise and at the location level.

6 Search features

The system should enable quick searches for relevant information, including by name, MRN, Patient ID, event type, dates, keywords, locations, and open incidents. This improves efficiency for investigators and administrators.

7 Automated record documentation

The system should automatically document activity associated with event records (including information related to event views, record opens, patient searches, and record changes). This ensures a proper chain of custody, including providing insight into when and why changes are made.



Scalability and Collaboration

The most effective safety event systems work with hospitals as an extension of their clinical teams—adapting to meet expanding needs, delivering on new initiatives, and helping instill a culture of continuous improvement.

1 Expansive capabilities

The system should be designed to scale and adapt to evolving needs. For example, a system integrated into a larger platform of solutions provided by the same vendor—such as those that reduce organizational risk, manage compliance concerns and legal claims, improve patient relations and service recovery, and streamline audit processes—provides workflow and cost advantages to hospitals.

2 Proven expertise

The vendor partner should provide references, case studies, and proof points that attest to their ability to support safety and quality objectives, such as those related to antimicrobial stewardship, sepsis, and medication errors. Industry recognition from organizations such as KLAS also help differentiate reputable and experienced vendors from the rest.

3 Collaboration

The vendor should explore new ideas and embark on new projects with their customers, and a wide range of hospital references should attest to this attribute. The most effective vendors are nimble and dedicated to continually improving features and functionality, expanding the value they deliver.

“Hospitals are facing new and unexpected challenges, and this is transforming how hospital leaders prioritize patient safety. The pandemic revealed gaps and vulnerabilities, and hospitals are moving quickly to address these problems with new technologies and initiatives that will have a long-lasting, positive impact.”

—David Goldsteen, MD
VigiLanz Chairman and CEO

VigiLanz Dynamic Safety Surveillance

VigiLanz Dynamic Safety Surveillance, part of a suite of safety-enhancing clinical surveillance tools ranked #1 by KLAS Research, is a safety event management cloud software application that supports patient safety initiatives. VigiLanz Dynamic Safety Surveillance provides a modern, configurable platform for identifying, reporting, managing, and communicating patient safety events.

By incorporating all of the features and functions listed in this guide, VigiLanz Dynamic Safety Surveillance enables organizations to rapidly identify and analyze enterprise-wide safety events, minimize time capturing and managing events, and promote a culture of safety while reducing adverse events.

Learn more at
vigilanzcorp.com/safety-surveillance



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