

Project Title

An Integrated Approach to Internal Communication of Patient Safety Messages to Staff

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Organisation(s) Involved

KK Women's and Children's Hospital

Project Period

Start date: 2016

Completed date: 2017

Project Category

Safety, Information Technology, Staff Empowerment, Education

Keywords

KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Safety, Patient Safety, Safety Culture, Organisation Culture, Information Technology, Staff Empowerment, Staff Education, Communications, Leadership, Target Zero Harm, Speak Up for Safety, Psychological Safety, Hand Hygiene, Near-Miss, "Quality, Safety and Risk Management", Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Video, Posters, Screensavers, e-Blasts, e-Newsletter, Survey, Awareness, Marketing Communications Department, Marketing Communications Department

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Introduction

In 2015/2016, SingHealth embarked on Target Zero Harm to eliminate preventable harm to patients. Numerous patient safety projects were initiated at the wards and clinics at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH). A key undertaking was to empower staff to Speak Up for Safety – led by the Quality, Safety and Risk Management (QSRM) Department.



There was a need for concise and coordinated key messages about Target Zero Harm and Speak Up for Safety. QSRM, the Marketing Communications Department (MCD) and Corporate Communications Department (CCD) collaborated to align patient safety messaging and develop collaterals for hospital-wide use.

Methodology

Communications Plan Aligning Patient Safety Messaging

In 2017, CCD presented a Communications Plan to KKH Senior Leadership (Fig 1). KKH Senior Leadership supported the proposal to align Divisions and Departments to a central set of patient safety thrusts – all brought under the umbrella of Target Zero Harm.

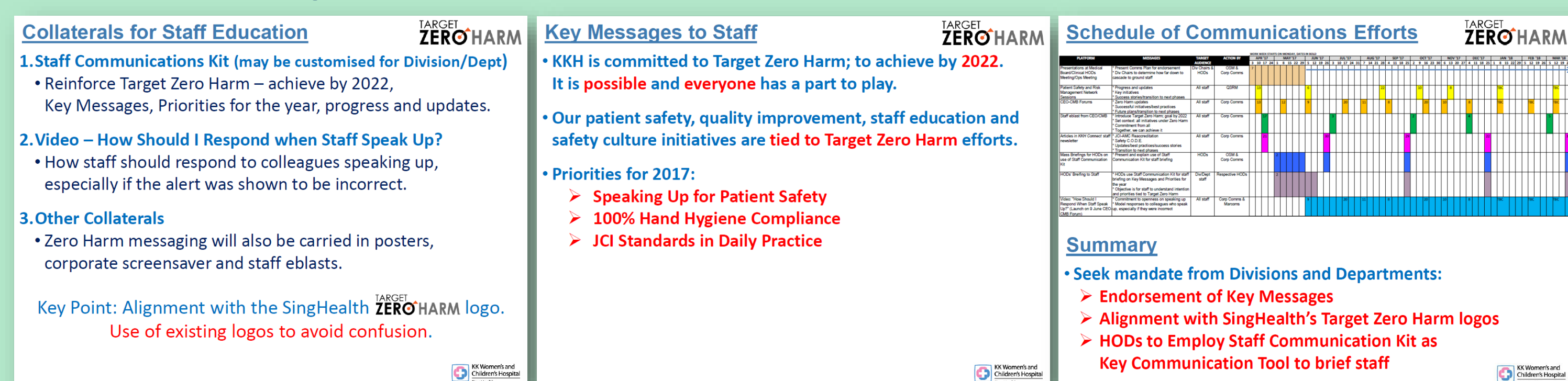


Fig 1: Communications Plan outlining value of consistent patient safety messaging to aid staff understanding and the communications platforms to be used for integrated messaging.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Patient Safety Culture Survey

The AHRQ Patient Safety Culture Survey provided QSRM data on the prevailing safety culture and receptiveness to Speak Up for Safety in KKH. QSRM and CCD collaborated on a series of email blasts (Fig 2) explaining the significance of the survey and rallying staff participation.

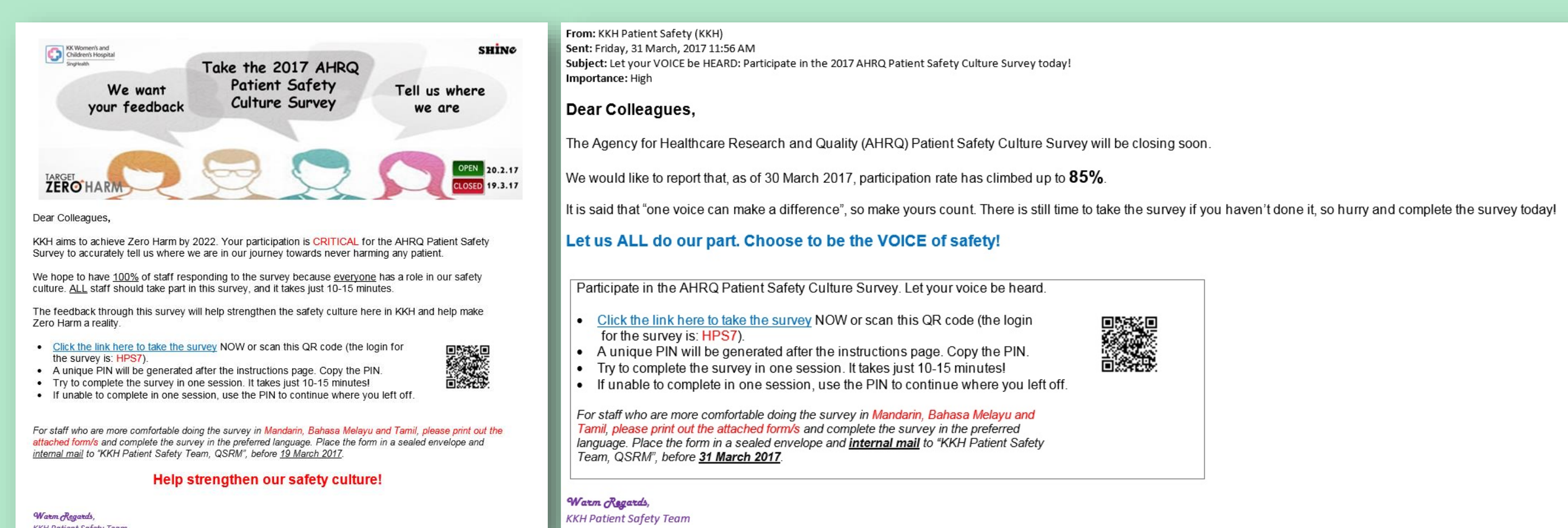


Fig 2: The AHRQ survey ran from February to March 2017. CCD and QSRM's email blasts called for staff to take part in the survey.

Speak Up for Safety Videos

Two videos (Fig 3) were produced by MCD and CCD, in consultation with QSRM. The first video expressed KKH Senior Leadership's commitment to support Speak Up for Safety, and the second video focused on Heads of Departments/Heads of Services' promise to respond positively to staff who speak up, even if it turns out that the staff's concerns may not be correct. This addressed the aspect of psychological safety to encourage speaking up.



Fig 3: Both videos demonstrate KKH's commitment to Speak Up for Safety, in so encouraging staff to speak up.

Leaders' Communication Decks

Since July 2017, CCD and QSRM have collaborated on the Leaders' Communication Decks (Fig 4). Updated every three to four months, the deck of slides updates staff on key Target Zero Harm priorities, such as 100% Hand Hygiene Compliance, Speak Up for Safety, and Near-Miss Reporting.

The contents are endorsed by KKH Senior Leadership, then disseminated to Division and Department Heads who then go through these slides with their staff during division/department meetings. The consistent and enduring message to staff is that every one has an important part to play towards Target Zero Harm, and that patient safety is an ongoing hospital priority.

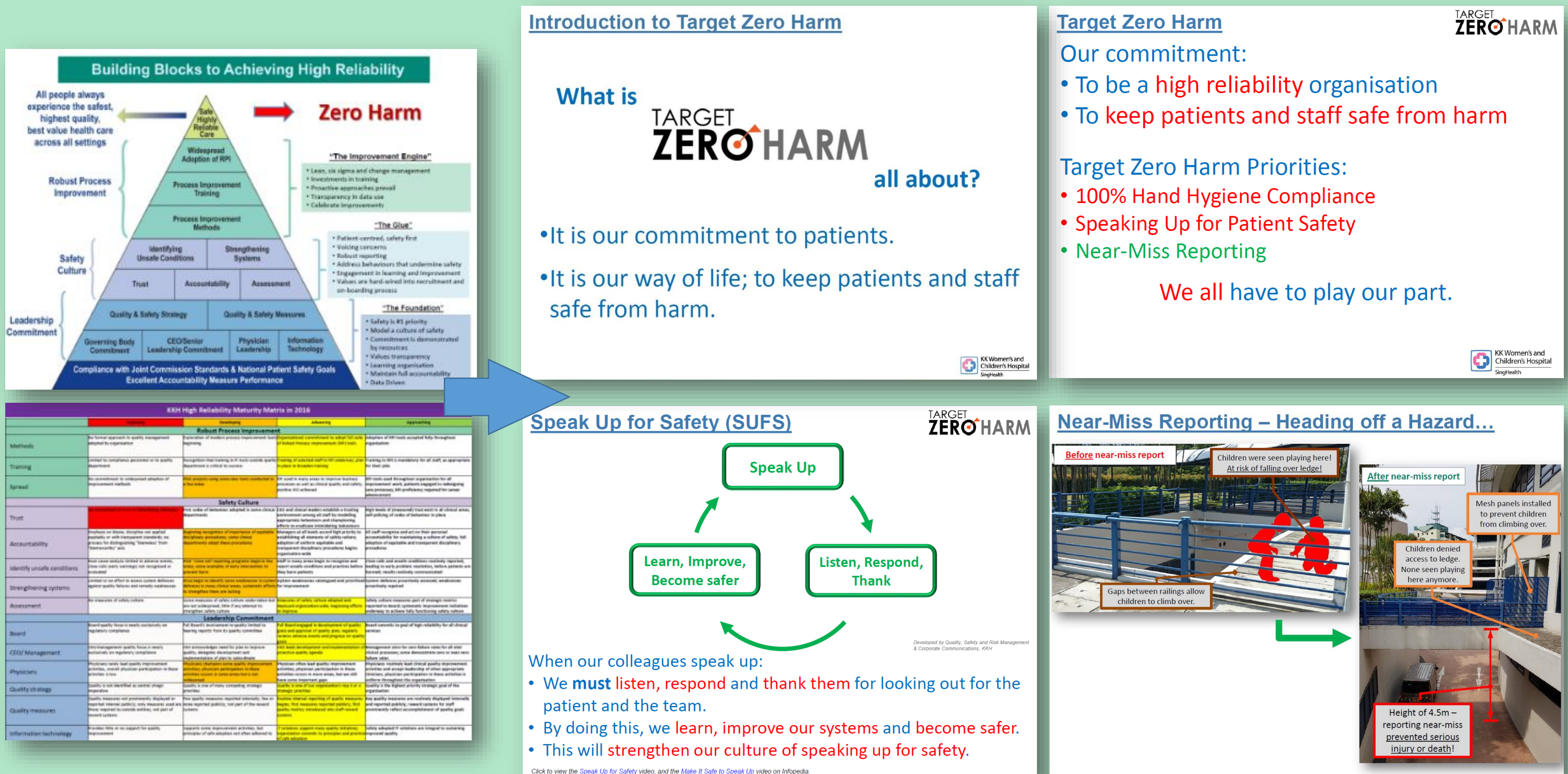


Fig 4: Key highlights from QSRM's Roadmap to Zero Harm are extracted and translated into the Leaders' Communication Decks for ease of presentation and understanding.

Internal Communications Channels

After Speak Up for Safety was launched in 2016, CCD worked with QSRM to distil the key messages from the launch event and ran a two-page spread in the *KKH Connect* staff e-newsletter, to extend awareness and dissemination of key points beyond the launch itself.

Patient safety messages in the Leaders' Communication Decks are repeated at the monthly CEO-CMB Forums, *KKH Connect* staff e-newsletter and corporate screensaver for reinforcement to staff (Fig 5).



Fig 5: Messages are repeated in other communication channels for reinforcement.

Results and Conclusion

- Collaboration on the staff email blasts saw participation for the AHRQ Patient Safety Culture Survey reach **94%**.
- Uptake in adoption of Leaders' Communication Decks by Heads of Departments/Heads of Services to educate and update their staff on key patient safety efforts in the hospital. Feedback from Clinical Heads indicate that they find the Leaders' Communication Decks a **useful tool for staff communication**.

With exemplary leadership by example, KKH's CEO, CMB and COO personally presented the slides in the Leaders' Communication Decks to Division and Department Heads during their respective meetings.

- Both Speak Up for Safety videos are played at Speak Up for Safety training sessions run by QSRM, at monthly CEO-CMB Forums and at Employee Orientation sessions. The videos have been downloaded/played back/viewed more than **4,890 times**.
- Alignment and integration of messaging and leveraging the expertise of CCD and MCD, in collaboration with QSRM, has contributed to a better understanding by staff of the hospital's patient safety priorities and the part they play towards the SingHealth cluster effort of Target Zero Harm. Contributing to patient safety beyond Singapore, the integrated communications materials and videos have been **requested by and shared with Great Ormond Street Hospital in the UK**, for reference and use in their journey towards high reliability.