

# COVID-19: HOW TO OPTIMIZE SAFETY HUDDLES AMID DISRUPTION

COVID-19 has created an immediate need for healthcare organizations to significantly change daily operations in order to care for an unprecedented volume of patients. Daily leadership safety huddles, which are vital to patient and workforce safety, have never been more important. Whether you are looking to quickly implement daily leadership safety huddles with your organization or make your current huddles as productive as possible, these frequently asked questions will help you optimize resources to keep patients and staff safe.

## Where should we hold daily leadership safety huddles?

- Conduct daily leadership safety huddles in the same place every day in a location that has sufficient space for all leaders.
- Make sure the location has telephone access to support off-site participation.

## When should we hold daily leadership safety huddles?

- Schedule daily leadership safety huddles at the same time every day.

- Ensure daily leadership safety huddles come after unit and department huddles, where leaders gather safety concerns from staff to report to the larger leadership group.

## How often should daily leadership safety huddles occur?

- Plan to meet at a minimum once a day; however, based on current circumstances, you may need to meet several times throughout the day and evening.

## Who should run the daily leadership safety huddles?

- Have one member of the executive or senior team lead. They can also be co-led with the incident command leader.

## What is the process of daily leadership safety huddles?

- Start safety huddles by asking for a positive safety story; this helps keep the focus on the good that is occurring despite the difficult circumstances.
- Leaders report in chronological order on any safety events or concerns from the:
  - **Past 24 hours:** Discuss resolution of safety concerns or continuation of threats to patient/staff safety from the last 24 hours, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages, medication shortages, and bed and capacity issues.

- **Current state:** Describe any safety issues expected today, such as capacity constraints and staff shortages.
- **Next 24 hours:** Define potential threats to safety or disruptions to care delivery.
  
- Next, the senior leader asks for follow-ups from yesterday's huddle that are due today. The corresponding leaders report on the issue, update the group and determine next steps.
  
- To complete the huddle, the senior leader:
  - Recaps follow-up deliverables from current huddle, including the issues and the responsible parties. The senior leader also confirms when updates are due, both within the current huddle and subsequent huddles if needed.
  - Prioritizes the focus for the day.
  - Identifies the information leaders will cascade to their units or departments.
  - Answers team questions and identifies when the next huddle will convene.
  - Ends the huddle.
  
- As needed, other leaders share any important non-safety-related announcements or organizational changes.

For more information, [contact us](#) or visit our [COVID-19 resources page](#).



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