



 **True North**
Patient Safety Organization
ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Patient Safety is our Primary Mission

A COMPONENT ORGANIZATION OF NORTHWELL HEALTH

I. About Us

True North Patient Safety Organization, Inc.

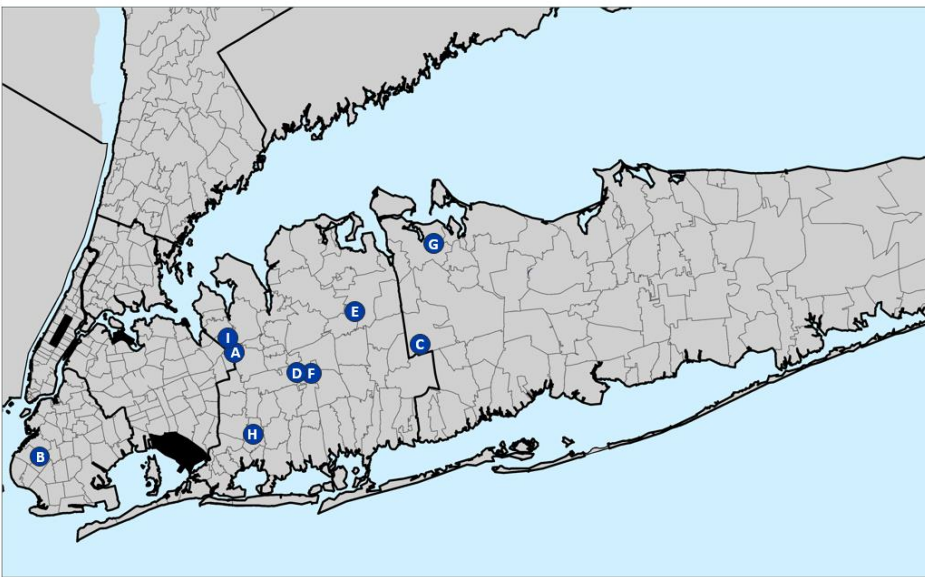
True North Patient Safety Organization, Inc. is a component organization of Northwell Health, which acts independently. Operating under the framework established by the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005 (PSQIA), Patient Safety Organizations (PSOs) collect data on patient safety events from healthcare providers. By maintaining confidentiality and legal protections for the shared information, PSOs encourage a culture of transparency and openness, enabling providers to share and learn from each other's experiences. This collaboration seeks to advance the development and dissemination of best practices aimed at reducing errors and adverse events. True North Patient Safety Organization's mission is to constantly improve patient safety and quality of care by collecting and analyzing patient safety information and sharing best practices to eliminate preventable harm.

Membership

True North PSO has 9 members, comprised of 2 health systems, 7 ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs), and 1 pharmacy network. New members for 2023 are noted with an asterisk (*).

Vivo Health Pharmacy joined the PSO in 2023, expanding the Patient Safety Organization scope. Vivo Health Pharmacy provides a wide range of services including patient education, free delivery of medications, drug counseling, medication therapy management, patient assistance programs, medication adherence programs, vaccination, and management programs for specific conditions and diseases. As they continue to expand their reach and services, participation in the PSO will provide the opportunity to enhance their patient safety work in support of their mission to improve the health of our communities by providing the highest quality of care.

"Thank you to all of the organizations who participate in the True North Patient Safety Organization. Through your collaboration, and sharing best practices and lessons learned, we are improving the quality of care we deliver to all of our patients."
- Peter Silver, MD, Executive Director



- A Northwell Health
- B Maimonides Medical Center
- C Melville Surgery Center
- D Endoscopy Center of Long Island (ECLI)
- E Endo Group—Syosset Ambulatory Surgery Center
- F Endo Group—Garden City Ambulatory Surgery Center
- G Digestive Health of Huntington
- H Lynbrook Surgery Center
- I Vivo Health Pharmacy*

II. True North Quality and Patient Safety Reporting Tool

True North PSO offers the Quality and Patient Safety Reporting Tool to participants for submission of any patient safety events or near-misses that might offer valuable insights to fellow PSO members. Throughout 2023, participating ASCs continued to utilize the Quality and Patient Safety Tool to submit patient safety events and near misses to the PSO. Event submissions are reviewed by the Quality and Patient Safety Committee on a quarterly basis with a focus on identifying learning opportunities and trends. Summary data is reviewed by event type, race/ethnicity, and contributing factors. Safety events are collected consistent with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Common Formats allowing for de-identified data to be submitted to the PSO Privacy Protection Center (PPC) for inclusion in the [Network of Patient Safety Databases \(NPSD\)](#).

During the year, several improvements were made to the tool, including the ability to obtain an export of events entered, and defaulting fields when appropriate to reduce the data entry burden. Additionally, work was done to determine the business requirements to enhance the software to include all event types, fields, and workflows to support Vivo Health Pharmacy's patient safety efforts. The work on these modifications will be begin in early 2024.

III. Safe Tables

Safe Tables are confidential gatherings of PSO participants during which typically a patient safety event or near miss safety event is reviewed. These sessions include discussion of contributing factors, root causes, risk reduction strategies, and encourage the sharing of best practices amongst PSO members. Additionally, these meetings serve as a platform for showcasing various quality management tools that can be employed to more effectively pinpoint and minimize risks. During 2023, True North PSO hosted and facilitated three Safe Table meetings on topics of concern for participating ASCs.

In March, the PSO hosted a Safe Table, **The Many Faces of Drug Diversion in Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs)**. Statistics on drug diversion in healthcare were shared, emphasizing the need for awareness. Post meeting distributions included a proactive risk assessment and reasonable suspicion checklist.

In September, True North PSO's Chief Counsel reviewed recent cases challenging PSQIA privileges in **Optimizing Patient Safety Privilege Given Recent Court Challenges**. The presentation reviewed the facts of the cases, discussed the arguments made, and shared the court's decision and rationale. The potential impacts of these decisions, as well as guidance on how to maximize the protections afforded under the Patient Safety Act, were addressed.

In December, the case **Every Count Counts: Preventing Retained Surgical Objects**, was presented. Discussion followed regarding best practice for preventing retained foreign objects, which can have clinical consequences for the patient. A proactive risk assessment was distributed to help sites identify potential vulnerabilities and implement risk reduction strategies.

Post-meeting surveys were favorable with feedback including:

- “Great presentation! Awareness was the biggest thing I learned from this session. Thank you”
- “Very helpful and informative discussion.”
- “The presentation was well done and informative. Having been in a leadership role in ASCs, this presentation revealed the many vulnerabilities and gave many tools to ensure prevention...”

96%

of survey respondents felt their knowledge of the topic presented was reinforced or increased.

IV. Participant Engagement

True North PSO News was distributed for Patient Safety Awareness Week in the Spring and for Healthcare Quality Week in the Fall. The Spring edition included a focus on Drug Diversion and information on using the new features in the Quality and Patient Safety Reporting Tool. It also included information on toolkits and suggested activities to celebrate Patient Safety Week.

The Fall edition included follow up on drug diversion in ambulatory surgery centers. Information was shared on free offerings related to Healthcare Quality Week. The Download section announced the first annual submission of de-identified data by the PSO to the Privacy Protection Network (PPC) for inclusion in the Network of Patient Safety Databases (NPSD). The Questions & Answers session addressed questions about the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act (PSQIA) and maximizing those protections.

V. National Participation

True North PSO seeks to support AHRQ in their national patient safety efforts. It was among the 60% of PSOs that voluntarily submitted the complete annual PSO profile, which assists AHRQ in collecting data on the attributes of PSOs and providers served.

True North PSO was represented at the 15th Annual Meeting of Patient Safety Organizations in April, which is a closed meeting for AHRQ-listed PSOs. The meeting included presentations from nine PSO’s with a focus on implementing the national action plan to advance patient safety and healthcare workforce safety. It also offered the opportunity for open discussion and to connect with workforce from other PSO’s and the AHRQ PSO program.

In May, True North PSO participated in the Patient Safety Evaluation System (PSES) Summit, a closed meeting for PSOs focused on designing and implementing programs within a Patient Safety Evaluation System. This was an opportunity to hear from experts in the field on topics ranging from case law to event analysis.

True North PSO made its first annual submission of de-identified data for inclusion in the NPSD in June. By sharing this data, it contributes to a collective pool of knowledge that can be used for analysis,

research, and learning. Annually, less than 20% of listed PSOs contribute their data each year, making True North a leader among its peers.

VI. Thank You

Truth North PSO thanks Northwell Health, the True North PSO board, and all the member sites for making this year's accomplishments possible. We look forward to continuing to work together to improve patient safety.