Book: Medication Safety and Cost Recovery: A Four-Step Approach for Executives

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The world renowned Harvard School of Public Health Lucian L. Leape, M.D. in the forward to the book starts by saying that "The cover for this book should include the admonition: Warning! Reading this book could change your life! Let us hope it does". He is so correct about the changes that the healthcare system needs to make regarding the safety of patients in the system as well as the major challenges that this issue presents to all players in healthcare. Both authors offer guidance to assist in this major task.

Every organization, every executive and every healthcare FTE out in the field should have this book. The authors offer a great four-step 100-day plan that is to die for, and that is found in chapter four of the book. The concepts are not new and are not earth shattering, but the combination is dynamic and exhilarating. The references from that chapter are worth looking up and reading. Again, the authors offer questions for any executive to use during their meetings to arrive at results. This is better than any project management tool I have encountered in healthcare.

Chapter five, Knowledge Management Loop for Medication Error Reduction, as well as chapter six titled Knowledge Management Loop to Match Staffing to Demand are two awesome chapters. In them the authors provide several change concepts from recognized sources in the area of medical error and medication error reduction like the Institute for Healthcare improvements, and recovering the costs associated with errors and other process inefficiencies that can be executed by the match staffing to demand team and other project leaders in their quality improvement work. The idea of recapturing lost productivity is simply worth the price of the book and more.

Special attention should be paid to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, critical in ensuring the safety of our patients and beneficiaries. The authors offer the start. You can use the book to plan for strategies, galvanize staff to reduce errors, establish processes for tracking errors, evaluate how well interventions are working, and recapture lost productivity. Buy this book now! We can all benefit. The last chapter offers the capstone of what we can all do to start the journey down the road to excellence.

As Dr Leape reminded us in the forward, this is an action manual, and that we do owe it to our patients and to ourselves to embrace these new methods and to change "a culture of blame to a culture of safety".