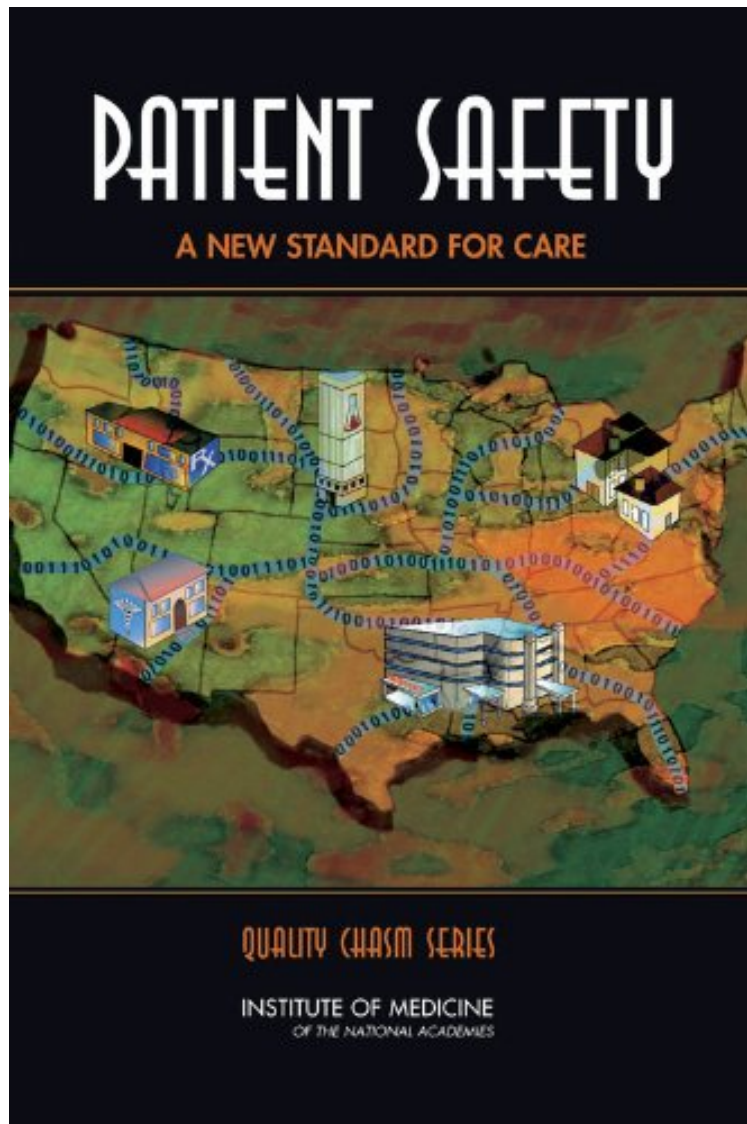


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Americans should be able to count on receiving health care that is safe. To achieve this, a new health care delivery system is needed " a system that both prevents errors from occurring, and learns from them when they do occur. The development of such a system requires a commitment by all stakeholders to a culture of safety and to the development of improved information systems for the delivery of health care. This national health information infrastructure is needed to provide immediate access to complete patient information and decision-support tools for clinicians and their patients. In addition, this infrastructure must capture patient safety information as a by-product of care and use this information to design even safer delivery systems. Health data standards are both a critical and time-sensitive building block of the national health information infrastructure. Building on the Institute of Medicine reports *To Err Is Human* and *Crossing the Quality Chasm*, Patient Safety puts forward a road map for the development and adoption of key health care data standards to support both information exchange and the reporting and analysis of patient safety data.

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