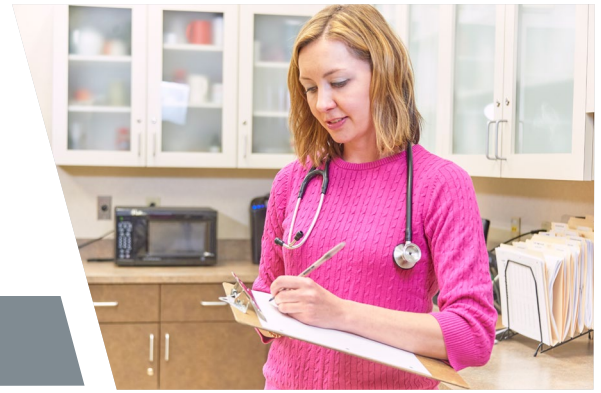


# HEALTHCARE SAFETY A-TO-Z

## A Glossary of Common Acronyms & Terms



Healthcare safety is filled with complex requirements, which can be made even more challenging by the numerous terms, acronyms and related industry “jargon.” To make it easier to understand the language of healthcare safety, use this glossary to clear up any confusion.

## Common Healthcare Safety Acronyms

- AHJ – Authority Having Jurisdiction
- BBI – Basic Building Information
- CMS – U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- CoP – Conditions of Participation
- EC – Environment of Care
- EM – Emergency Management
- EP – Elements of Performance
- HAIs – Healthcare-Associated Infections
- HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996  
*(pronounce acronym as HIP-pah)*
- IC – Infection Prevention or Control
- ICRA – Infection Control Risk Assessment  
*(pronounce acronym as ICK-rah)*
- IJ – Immediate Jeopardy
- ILSM – Interim Life Safety Measures
- JCAHO – The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations  
*(pronounce acronym as JAY-co)*
- LS – Life Safety
- LSD – Life Safety Drawings
- NPSG – National Patient Safety Goals
- PCRA – Pre-construction Risk Assessment  
*(pronounced as PICK-rah)*
- PFI – Plan for Improvement
- POA – Plan of Action
- SAFER – Survey Analysis for Evaluating Risk  
*(pronounce acronym same as its spelling)*
- SE – Sentinel Event
- SIG – Standards Interpretation Group
- SOC – Statement of Conditions
- TJC – The Joint Commission
- WPV – Workplace Violence

# Common Healthcare Safety Terms & Definitions



**Adverse Event:** An incident that results in harm to a patient during the course of medical care.

**Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ):** An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard.

**Basic Building Information (BBI):** A document that is kept in the statement of conditions where healthcare organizations are required to identify things like square footage, building construction type, and occupancy classifications. The intent behind the accurate square footages is to assist the Joint Commission in more accurately determining the number of days required for the organization's building tour.

**Biohazard:** Biological substances that pose a threat to the health of living organisms, particularly humans.

**Conditions of Participation:** Regulatory standards that healthcare providers must meet to participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs in the United States. These standards are established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**Elements of Performance:** Specific standards established by The Joint Commission (TJC) to help healthcare organizations operationalize and demonstrate compliance with the broader standards. TJC sets forth these EPs as part of its accreditation process to ensure that healthcare facilities meet rigorous quality and safety requirements. The specific EPs can vary based on the standards they are associated with.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Planning and organizing activities to ensure effective response to emergencies, disasters, or unexpected events in a healthcare setting.

**Environmental Rounds:** Routine assessments conducted within healthcare facilities to monitor and evaluate various aspects of the physical environment. These rounds aim to ensure compliance with safety standards, infection control practices, and overall environmental conditions that impact patient care and staff well-being. Typically conducted by a team that may include representatives from various departments, such as nursing, infection control, facility management, and environmental services.

**Fall Prevention:** Strategies and measures implemented to reduce the risk of patients or individuals falling, which can result in injury.

**Hand Hygiene:** The practice of cleaning hands to prevent the spread of infections, including handwashing with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

**Immediate Jeopardy (IJ):** A situation in which a healthcare facility's non-compliance with CMS regulations has caused, or is likely to cause, serious harm or death to a patient. Considered the most serious level of deficiency that a healthcare facility can have during a survey conducted by CMS or its state partners.

**Infection Control (IC):** Measures and practices to prevent the spread of infections within healthcare settings, including hand hygiene, sterilization, and personal protective equipment.

**Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA):** Structured process used in healthcare facilities to assess and manage infection risks during construction, renovation, or maintenance activities. The goal is to minimize the risk of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) that could result from potential disruptions to the environment.

# Common Healthcare Safety Terms & Definitions



**Interim Life Safety Measures (ILSM):** Temporary safety precautions and strategies implemented in healthcare facilities during construction, renovation, or maintenance activities. The goal of ILSM is to maintain a safe environment for patients, staff, and visitors by minimizing the potential risks associated with construction or maintenance projects that could affect life safety systems. These measures are designed to ensure that the facility remains in compliance with life safety codes and standards throughout the duration of the construction work.

**Life Safety (LS):** A set of measures and practices designed to protect people's lives in the event of an emergency or disaster, particularly within buildings and facilities. The concept is essential in various settings, including healthcare facilities, schools, workplaces, and residential buildings. Life Safety encompasses strategies, systems, and protocols aimed at preventing or minimizing injuries, casualties, and property damage during emergencies.

**Life Safety Code:** A set of codes and standards developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to establish minimum requirements for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of buildings to protect occupants from fire and other hazards. NFPA 101, commonly referred to as the Life Safety Code, is widely adopted across the United States and serves as a key reference for ensuring life safety in various types of occupancies, including healthcare facilities, educational institutions, residential buildings, and more.

**Life Safety Drawing:** Detailed architectural drawings that provide a visual representation of the life safety features and components within a building. These drawings are a crucial part of a healthcare facility's documentation and are often required for compliance with regulatory standards.

**Medication Safety:** Procedures and protocols aimed at minimizing the risk of medication errors and ensuring the safe administration of medications.

**National Patient Safety Goals (NPSG):** Evidence-based patient safety guidelines established by The Joint Commission (TJC). The NPSGs are designed to address specific areas of concern and improve the safety and quality of healthcare provided to patients.

**Patient Safety:** The prevention of harm to patients during the provision of healthcare services and the promotion of a culture that prioritizes safety.

**Plan for Improvement (PFI):** A structured approach used in healthcare organizations to address identified deficiencies, gaps, or areas for improvement in various aspects of patient care, safety, and operational processes. It is part of a broader quality improvement framework aimed at enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of healthcare services.

**Pre-construction Risk Assessment (PCRA):** Comprehensive evaluation conducted in healthcare settings before the initiation of construction or renovation projects. The primary purpose of a PCRA is to identify potential risks related to the construction activities that could impact patient safety, staff well-being, and the overall quality of healthcare services. This assessment is crucial for implementing preventive measures and ensuring the continuity of care during the construction process.

**Quality Improvement (QI):** Systematic and continuous actions that lead to measurable improvement in healthcare services and patient outcomes.

**Root Cause Analysis (RCA):** A structured method used to analyze the underlying causes of adverse events or near misses to prevent their recurrence.

**Sentinel Event:** An unexpected occurrence involving death or serious physical or psychological harm to a patient, often requiring investigation for prevention in the future.

# Common Healthcare Safety Terms & Definitions



**Standard Precautions:** Infection control practices that healthcare providers use to prevent the transmission of infectious agents, including the use of personal protective equipment.

**Statement of Conditions (SOC):** The SOC is a comprehensive document that provides an overview of the physical environment and building systems within a healthcare facility. It includes information on the construction, fire protection features, safety systems, and other essential building components.

**Survey Analysis for Evaluating Risk (SAFER):** A program developed by The Joint Commission (TJC) to enhance the assessment and management of risk within healthcare organizations. The SAFER initiative is part of TJC's efforts to improve the safety and quality of patient care by providing organizations with a structured approach to identify and address potential areas of risk.

**Survey:** Comprehensive evaluations of a healthcare organization's processes, policies, and practices to ensure compliance with established standards for quality and safety.

**Universal Protocol:** A set of safety procedures to prevent wrong-site, wrong-procedure, and wrong-person surgery.

**Workplace Violence (WPV):** Incidents where staff are abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, including verbal abuse and physical assault.



## Keep Your Facility in Compliance with Complex Healthcare Safety Requirements

J. J. Keller's **Healthcare Consulting Services** provide the insights and assistance you need to minimize your facility's risk areas, maintain accreditation, and comply with the regulatory requirements.

### Accreditation Mock Survey

This onsite mock survey focuses on TJC Life Safety, Environment of Care, and Emergency Management accreditation standards the exact same way it would be conducted by a Life Safety surveyor.

### Document Review & Support

We'll meticulously evaluate your records to ensure they're meeting TJC Environment of Care, Life Safety, and Emergency Management standards.

### Life Safety Assessment

This onsite assessment evaluates whether your building's Life Safety systems meet TJC and NFPA 101 Life Safety requirements.

### Workplace Violence Assessment

We'll review your facility's physical environment and its workplace violence program, including policies and procedures, injury reports, staff training and more.

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