

What is Lurking in the Shadows – A Latent Risk Threat? Using Simulation as a Framework for Quality Improvement

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Terminology:

In Situ Simulation: Simulations that are conducted in the actual patient care environment, involving the entire healthcare team and utilizing the current equipment, systems and processes.

Latent Risk Threats (LRTs): System or design failures that contribute to the occurrence of errors or make errors prone to cause harm; also commonly termed latent failures or latent safety threats.

Active Errors: A witnessed error that is often attributed to frontline personnel as it occurs at the interface between an individual and the system.

In Situ Simulation and LRTs:

Conducting in situ simulation allows teams to identify latent patient safety threats, also known as LRTs and develop solutions before patient safety is compromised. See the reference list below for a list of studies involving the use of in situ simulation for LRT detection.

The tool on the following page may be used to categorize and track LRTs (as well as active errors) that are uncovered through an in situ simulation. During the simulation, assign a recorder to use this sheet to document any identified threats. Following the simulation, use this tool to track any solutions you brainstorm for each threat.

Simulation LRT Identification Tool

Date/Time of Sim	Scenario	Facilitator	Unit/Location
Identified Threats	Information Shared	Source of Information	Suggested Solutions
<i>Policy/Procedure (policy/procedure not followed due to lack of role definition, knowledge, skills or training) Ex: No patient ID bands on, Adult code team arriving for Pediatric code, No hard stop before incision)</i>			
<i>Equipment (Technical, equipment or environment failure or not available) Ex: No baby warmer in OR for resuscitation, Noise level too high in code situation, Crash cart stored in wrong place)</i>			
<i>Process Issue (System process failure- inter-department or unit services/support/communication) Ex: Lab did not know where to go when heard code paged, Inadequate blood order protocols during emergencies)</i>			

References:

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