1. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) strives to be an organization that consistently acknowledges opportunities for improvement. We aim for excellence in the care we provide. Providing patient-centered care that focuses on quality and safety is pivotal to this process. By working in teams, VHA employees ensure patient safety is a top priority in our mission of serving Veterans, our Nation's heroes.

2. This memorandum introduces the Stop the Line for Patient Safety initiative. "Stop the Line" refers to a measured response from VHA staff members when detecting errors or identifying areas of concern in the health care delivery process. When staff members "Stop the Line," they are ensuring that Veterans are getting the safest and best quality care.

3. The Stop the Line for Patient Safety initiative enhances current safety guidelines and practices, empowering staff to speak up and communicate their concerns to other members of the team regardless of their position. The initiative identifies three simple steps (known as the 3Ws©): Say what you see; Say what you are concerned about; and, Say what you want to happen to keep things safe, to facilitate this process.

4. Please disseminate this information by showing the video (copy included) and discussing the toolkit materials throughout your organization to reinforce its importance. The awareness and support of all your staff is critical to providing safe, high-quality care. If additional information is required, please contact Yuri Walker, RN, JD, MPH, Director, Risk Management Program, Office of Quality, Safety and Value, at 202-461-1629.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D.

Attachments