

Studying patient safety in health care organizations: accentuate the qualitative.

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This commentary argues for the inclusion of diverse research methods, particularly qualitative ones, to improve and advance existing knowledge about patient safety. The authors provide a background discussion on the complexity of studying medical errors and the health care system itself in order to devise effective strategies for improvement. In this context, they offer a number of case examples to illustrate these challenges with greater discussion of the pros and cons to each methodological approach (a comprehensive table is included). Finally, a series of action steps are given for organizations to implement qualitative methods into their patient safety research agendas.