Human Factors - where have we got to, where next?

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What are human factors/ergonomics?

“the factors that enhance clinical performance through an understanding of the effects of teamwork, tasks, equipment, workspace, culture, and organisation on human behaviour and abilities, and application of that knowledge in clinical settings.”

Dr Ken Catchpole, Human factors expert/ergonomist
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Making it easy to do the right things
What’s happened since 2005 at the frontline?

• Use of tools such as checklists
• Use of simulation & TRM training
• Better recognition of non-technical skills
Some behaviours rare in healthcare:

- Resolves ambiguity
- Encourages input from others
- Does not compete with others
- Concentrates on facts not personalities
- Intervenes if deviation from standard
- Uses open Q's and seeks colleagues ideas
- Identifies potential threats & errors
Where is healthcare now?

• Error still felt to be due to poor performance and lack of technical perfection
• Continual focus on learning about “what” - but not “why”
• Focus on the frontline inadequacies, not design, system and leadership
• Large gap between "work as imagined" versus "work as done"
MITIGATE CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

TRAP ERROR

AVOID ERROR
MITIGATE CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

TRAP ERROR
Driving 90+ mph – the ‘illegal-illegal’ space (for almost all of us!)

Driving 80 mph – the ‘Illegal-normal’ space

The posted speed limit is 70 mph – the ‘legal’ space

Life Pressures

Perceived vulnerability

Belief Systems

Systemic Migration to Boundaries
Just Culture?

Inadvertent human error

Gross negligence or deliberate

Support

Coach

Sanction
CHFG work

Helping healthcare become high reliability

Supporting the development of independent investigation and intelligent regulation

Encouraging education and training in human factors
CHFG achievements

Greater prominence of "human factors", the NQB Concordat, but......

Human factors expert input to a number of national projects (Patient Safety First, Safer Surgery Task Force, National Standards for Invasive Procedures, Sign Up To Safety, Learning Culture work, HSIB), but......

Human factors now included in education and training more routinely, but......
What do we need to happen next?

Listening, by all leaders, "what can I do to make it easier to do the right things?"

Alignment of systems to make it easier to do the right things, coordinated by the NQB/whoever..

Inclusion and respect for human factors science and experts in any major change/QI programmes

Systems thinking, human factors/performance & notechs to be included in clinical exams

Continuation of work around a just, learning and safety culture, to include legislation
Thank you

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