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On November 7th and 8th, I attended the International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare in Brisbane. Jointly organized by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the British Medical Journal, the conference gathered over 5000 delegates to share insights and strategies for improving healthcare outcomes through quality improvement.

Lisa McKenzie (VP, Asia Pacific IHI) opened the forum with an inspiring welcome, encouraging us to embrace the challenges and messiness of pushing boundaries to find innovative solutions in healthcare. The plenary session titled "What matters most and what does it take to lead equity?" featured Debbie Sorensen from the Pasifika Medical Association (New Zealand) and Tanya Hosch from the Australian Football League. They shared personal experiences of racism within the healthcare system and emphasised the importance of culturally anchored services. Key messages included the need for healthcare professionals to be culturally responsive and adapt their interactions to effectively serve diverse populations.

A central theme of the forum was codesign, highlighting the importance of working with consumers to understand their needs and what is important to them. Speakers stressed the significance of patient feedback in developing protocols and practices that lead to meaningful improvements in patient outcomes. A notable example included Safer Care Victoria's Consumer Engagement in a Postpartum Haemorrhage Collaborative, where effective collaboration enabled them to embed lived experience into their project design to produce tangible improvements that were rewarding for everyone involved.

The forum featured sessions across five streams: Safety, Leadership, Population, Change, and People. I attended sessions on integrating AI into healthcare, tackling the healthcare professional wellbeing crisis, whole systems safety, combining the power of storytelling with data and quality improvement methodology, and improving VTE prophylaxis with the development of a VTE dashboard. All which provided me with lots of ideas to bring back to my own workplace.

A standout presentation by Safer Care Victoria focused on the Joy at Work framework, an initiative aimed at reducing burnout and enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare workers. Partnering with IHI, Safer Care Victoria implemented several strategies to create system-level changes across various healthcare settings. These strategies included "What Matters to You" conversations, rapid PDSA cycles, and the use of the Modified Mini-Z Burnout Tool to measure system changes. Examples of implemented changes ranged from huddles to improve camaraderie, adjusted rostering to manage fatigue, shout-out boards for recognition, and fixing broken equipment to reduce waste.

The conference provided a valuable opportunity to learn about international efforts in the quality and safety space and reinforced the importance of embracing new ideas and perspectives to drive positive change in healthcare. I am grateful to NZHPA for the education grant that supported my attendance at this conference.