



**SOUTH WEST**

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PATIENT SAFETY  
COLLABORATIVE

Safety Culture: The SCORE  
Survey

# Safety Culture & the SCORE Survey

As part of their involvement with the South West Patient Safety Collaborative, in collaboration with the South West Academic Health Science Networks (AHSN), health organisations have agreed to take part in the SCORE survey. The survey is an internationally recognised way of measuring and understanding culture that exists within organisations and teams. This document explains what the survey is, what it measures, and what it could mean for your team and the NHS.

## What is culture?

Culture simply means ‘the way we doing things around here’. It’s a way of quantifying what it feels like to come to work. A good culture usually means that people enjoy coming to work and feel like a valued member of the team. It’s not about what you do but **the way** in which you do it in terms of the interactions between people in a unit, team or department.

A good culture cannot be provided by leaders, although they do have a part to play. Culture is local and each member of the team needs to understand their role in supporting and contributing to a positive culture and work environment for everyone, every day. Leaders must drive the culture change by demonstrating their own commitment to safety culture and providing the resources to achieve a culture of safety.

## Why is it important to understand and improve culture?

Happier teams provide better care to patients. It is now accepted that good culture in the NHS is crucial to ensure that patients receive high quality care and better outcomes. As teams work to improve systems and processes, it is important that teams better understand their own culture to identify what works well and what can be improved.

## What is the SCORE survey?

There are many tools that can be used to gain insight into your team’s culture so that you can identify strengths and weaknesses and start to drive genuine improvement.

The SCORE survey is an anonymous, online tool that teams can use to assess their culture. It provides an overview but also detail in specific focus areas such as communication and staff burn out. Once the survey has been completed, the results are provided to that team alone for them to use to start conversations internally about what and how they would like to improve culture. The results are not shared with anyone else and will never be used for bench marking or performance management.

We are pleased to be working with Safe and Reliable Healthcare, LLC to make the SCORE survey available to health and care teams in the South West. Safe and Reliable Healthcare, LLC have extensive experience in improving organisational culture over the last two decades.

## Where are we now?

We are delighted to have supported the SCORE survey and work to improve culture across the South West in several organisations over the past 6 months. These include acute care, mental health and primary care.

A Consultant from Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust says “The survey questions are accessible and were easily transferable to our work setting. This has enabled us to achieve a 60% response rate from staff from all walks of medicine. Debriefing the results back to teams has enabled us to explore the trickier issues that would not normally be discussed. We have identified issues that we can start to work on now and those that will feed into quality improvement projects in our department”.

## How much will the SCORE Survey cost to do?

We are keen to ensure that all health and care organisations have the opportunity to access support to improve culture whilst we have the funding secured to provide this at **no cost** to teams.

This funding is currently available until March 2017. In order to access this support, teams need to sign up as soon as possible with a commitment to complete at least one cycle of the survey by March 2017. Future funding may well become available but cannot be guaranteed at this stage.

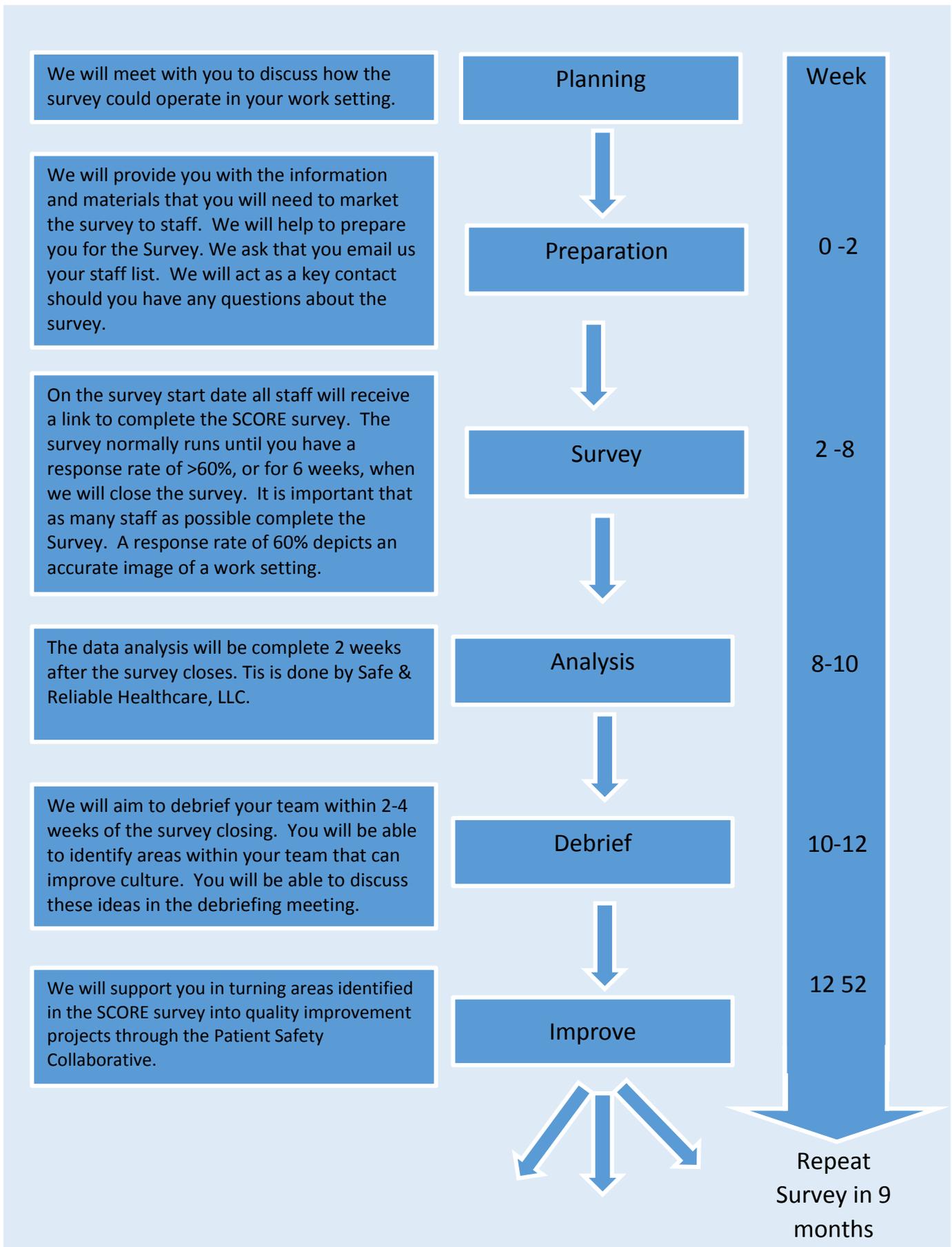
## Are there any risks?

The most significant risk lies in doing the survey without intention or commitment to use the results to drive improvement. A survey that is seen to be done for the purpose of ‘box ticking’ can have a negative impact on culture. We will support you to design the follow up to the survey to minimise this risk but ultimately it is up to your team to use the results effectively.

Another risk is that people do not participate in the SCORE survey. A survey that has a high response rate demonstrates an accurate image of a work setting, it is therefore important that as many people as possible within teams participate in the survey. We will support you by providing you with all the materials that you will need to encourage staff to participate in the survey and acting as a contact for any questions or concerns that you may have about the Survey.

A risk is that when teams have been debriefed the results from the SCORE survey, providing you with a clear indication of which areas will need to improve if you are to achieve cultures that deliver high quality care to patients. We will support you by translating these areas for improvement into quality improvement projects and equip you with the skills that you will need to improve culture within your team through the IHI model for improvement.

## What does the process look like?



## What support will we get?

Once you have signed up you will receive support with every phase of the culture improvement process including:

- Identification of a local individual to lead administration of the survey within a team
- Templates to collect information required prior to survey administration
- Leaflets and posters to advertise the survey to your team
- Regular updates on survey response rates
- Access to an online repository of information and resources
- Detailed analytics of results and access to a reporting platform
- Posters displaying headline results for display
- Support in planning and delivering the debriefing
- Support in planning and delivering improvement projects
- A repeat of the survey in 12-18 months to measure improvements in culture

## How do we get started?

Contact us as soon as possible to talk to us about your team and your interest in improving team culture. You can in touch in the following ways:

**By phone: 01392 247903**

**South West Patient Safety Collaborative Patient Safety blog:** <http://patientsafetysouthwest.org/>

**South West Patient Safety Collaborative:**

**Dr Matt Hill**

[matt.hill1@nhs.net](mailto:matt.hill1@nhs.net)

**Chloe Brind**

[chloe.brind@swahsn.com](mailto:chloe.brind@swahsn.com)