

The Doctor Is In: Center for Patient Safety Welcomes Dr. Michael Handler as Medical Director

Jefferson City, MO -- A leading voice for patient safety will bring his expertise and insights to the [Center for Patient Safety \(CPS\)](#).

Dr. Michael Handler is the vice president of medical affairs and chief medical officer for SSM St. Joseph Hospital West in Lake Saint Louis, MO. He also is a former CPS Hospital Advisory Committee member and currently serves on the Center's board.

In his capacity as CPS Medical Director, Dr. Handler will bring his expertise and advice to the Center's initiatives and activities. Additionally, he will be a liaison between CPS and the physician community.

CPS Executive Director Becky Miller said Dr. Handler's skills and experience as a physician and proponent of patient safety culture will enhance the Center's resources and services.

"Dr. Handler has shown a deep appreciation and understanding of patient safety and how important it is to spread this culture across our all healthcare settings," Ms. Miller said. "Now, he is officially bringing his every day hands-on leadership and skills as an Institute for Healthcare Improvement Patient Safety Fellow to the Center. He will serve as our in-house physician, so to speak."

In addition to his other duties at SSM St. Joseph Hospital West, Dr. Handler is director of the hospital's Patient Safety Committee. He is chair of the SSM St. Louis Network Team STEPPS implementation team. [Team STEPPS is a patient safety initiative](#) developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). It focuses on evidence-based teamwork to improve communication and teamwork skills among health care professionals.

Dr. Handler said working as CPS Medical Director is natural extension of his clinical and administrative work in the area of patient safety.

"To me, there are few more important issues in healthcare today," he said. "Saving lives and eliminating harm in healthcare settings must be a national priority. It adds up to better care and lower healthcare costs."

About Michael Handler, MD

As vice president of medical affairs and chief medical officer at SSM St. Joseph Hospital West, Dr. Handler serves as liaison between the organized medical staff and administration, which

advances the clinical practice of medicine for the campus. He also acts as the physician adviser to case management medicine for the campus.

- Read more: ["St. Joe's West Chief Puts Patient Safety First"](#) (Wentzville Patch)

Dr. Handler has been a physician in the state of Missouri since 1985. He operated a private Obstetrics and Gynecology practice in Kirkwood and Wildwood from 1989 through 2007. Dr. Handler also served as house obstetric physician for SSM St. Joseph Hospital of Kirkwood (SJHK). Additionally, he spent two years serving as SJHK's medical director for quality improvement, during which time he implemented many successful quality improvement initiatives.

Dr. Handler earned his medical degree at University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine. He completed his internship and residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1989 at St. Louis University Hospitals. He completed his Master of Medical Management degree from Tulane University in 2008 and is a fellow of the American College of Physician Executives.

About CPS

The Center for Patient Safety is a private, not-for-profit corporation dedicated to fostering change throughout the nation's healthcare delivery systems and across the continuum of care. The Center's vision is "a healthcare environment safe for all patients and health care providers, in all processes, all the time."

The Center's mission is "to be a leader in providing solutions and resources to improve patient safety and the quality of healthcare delivery by conducting activities in collaboration with health care providers, physicians, purchasers, consumers and government."