World Patient Safety Day 17 September 2026: "Safe care for noncommunicable diseases"

Introduction

In Finland, the World Health Organization (WHO) World Patient Safety Day is observed as Client and Patient Safety Day, incorporating perspectives from social welfare as well as healthcare. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is nationally responsible for implementing the day, and the Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety coordinates the activities.

Objectives of Client and Patient Safety Day in Finland

- Raise awareness of client and patient safety challenges related to chronic diseases and improve safety by addressing associated health and wellbeing risk factors from the perspectives of individuals, the service system, and living conditions.
- Strengthen the capacity of people with chronic diseases and their support networks for self-management and prevention, and promote their participation in identifying safety risks and developing solutions together with social welfare and healthcare professionals and decision-makers.
- Encourage the inclusion of client and patient safety principles in national guidance on chronic diseases, strengthen the role of primary healthcare, and support smooth care and service pathways.
- Support social welfare and healthcare professionals in strengthening client and patient safety and involving clients, patients, and their families.

Finland's main event: the national seminar "Safety in the Care of Chronic Diseases – A Shared Responsibility"

The main event was held from 12:00 to 16:00 on 17 September 2026 in the auditorium of Vaasa Central Hospital, in conjunction with the 8th National Client and Patient Safety Seminar. The event was attended by 85 people onsite and 387 remotely, giving a total of 472 participants.

The seminar focused on issues of safety, quality, and effectiveness in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases.

The first session was chaired by **Sanna-Maria Kivivuori** (pictured on the left), Senior Ministerial Adviser at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Chair of the Finnish Society for Client and Patient Safety (SPTY), and **Marina Kinnunen** (pictured on the right), Director at the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia.

The seminar opened with a video greeting from **Wille Rydman**, Minister of Social Affairs and Health.

The first presentation was delivered by **Pekka Puska** (bottom left), Professor and Director General Emeritus of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), and Chair of Terve Paino ry and Suomen ASH ry. His topic was “Prevention of chronic diseases is the best form of patient safety”.

Maarit Bärlund (top right), Specialist in Oncology and Adjunct Professor at the Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa, spoke about safety in oncological care.

Suvi Holmberg (bottom left), University Lecturer in Social Work at Tampere University, presented “Everyday safety when living with cancer – support from social work”.

Juho Lehto (pictured on the right), Professor of Palliative Medicine at Tampere University and Chief Physician at the Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa, spoke on “Palliative and end-of-life care – safe until the end of life”.

After the coffee break, **Tuija Ikonen** (bottom right), Director of the Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety and Professor of Patient Safety at University of Turku replaced Marina Kinnunen as co-chair.

Ville Miettinen (top right), a specialist in general practice with special competence in diabetes care and medical education, and Chair of The Finnish Association of Lifestyle Medicine, delivered a presentation entitled “Obesity, the Epidemic of Our Time”.

Markku Partinen (bottom left), Professor Emeritus at the University of Helsinki, neurologist with special competence in sleep medicine, addressed “Insomnia and sleep apnoea – managing the risks, but how?”.

Kiti Haukilahti (top right), a specialist at the Organisation for Respiratory Health in Finland, spoke on “Patient skills supporting self-management”.

The day concluded with a panel discussion entitled “Safely effective”. The discussion was chaired by **Heikki Kaukoranta** (second from the right), specialist in general medicine and clinical microbiology, and **Tuija Ikonen**. The panellists were (from left to right) **Suvi Holmberg, Ville Miettinen, Pekka Puska, Maarit Bärlund, Markku Partinen,** and **Kiti Haukilahti**.

Communications

The Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety maintains a webpage for World Patient Safety Day. The webpage presents the annual theme, the programme of Finland's main event, and materials including this report submitted to WHO.

The Centre also publishes current information about the day on X and LinkedIn and promotes it in its newsletter and in connection with its webinars.

Activities could be followed on social media using the hashtags:

#WorldPatientSafetyDay
#AsiakasJaPotilasturvallisuuspäivä
#KlientOchPatientsäkerhetsdagen

On 14 September 2026, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health published a press release prepared jointly with the Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety. Several wellbeing services counties and other social welfare and healthcare organisations highlighted the day in different ways through their own channels.

World Patient Safety Day activities reported to the Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety

Wellbeing services counties participated in various ways. For example, staff dressed in orange in keeping with the theme, buildings and landmarks were illuminated in orange, and programmes related to the day's theme were organised.

Wellbeing Services County of Kainuu

A lecture hall was reserved for showing the main event. From 14 to 21 September 2026, the information screens at Kainuu Central Hospital, visible to clients and staff, presented a summary of Client and Patient Safety Day, its objectives, and the National Impact Award received by Kainuu Wellbeing Services County in May from the THL Quality Registers. The presentations used the colourful visual materials produced by WHO for the day.

Wellbeing Services County of Central Finland

The day had a modest presence. It was advertised at the OLKA point, while the intranet featured an announcement and a link to the national main event. The day was also highlighted on social media.

Wellbeing Services County of Kymenlaakso

The client and patient safety unit, together with associations, visited OLKA points at Ratamo Hospital in Kouvola and Kymenlaakso Central Hospital in Kotka.

Oral healthcare received a certificate of recognition for promoting client and patient safety. The recognition was based on its active leadership of participatory and multiprofessional patient safety development. This development is reflected in ensuring competence in the use of medical devices and medication safety, harmonising operating practices, open collaboration, and a positive safety culture.

On 17 September, an afternoon event entitled “Quality of Life” was organised with the health and wellbeing promotion team, associations, and representatives of the City of Kotka. More than 80 residents of Kymenlaakso attended.

Western Uusimaa Wellbeing Services County

On 16 September 2026, the Wellbeing Services County held a quality seminar at which the Client and Patient Safety Initiative of the Year was also awarded. Approximately 130 people attended the seminar.

On 17 September 2026, a webinar was held under the theme of World Client and Patient Safety Day. It provided general information about the day, its background, and the 2026 theme. The winners of the Client and Patient Safety Initiative of the Year award introduced themselves and presented their initiative. Approximately 20 people attended. The webinar was recorded, and the recording was made available internally.

Wellbeing Services County of North Karelia

The Wellbeing Services County observed Client and Patient Safety Theme Week from 14 to 20 September 2026. The theme was “Safe care and services for people with chronic diseases”.

The theme week was visible in many ways. Orange, the theme colour for client and patient safety, was displayed in the units. The theme was also highlighted on social media, for example by showing how safety is reflected in services and what practices have been introduced to promote client and patient safety.

Representatives of associations were present at OLKA points to describe their activities. A survey for service users used one question to explore clients’ views on what is important to them in the treatment of chronic diseases. The survey results will be reported during the autumn.

Professionals from the Wellbeing Services County actively wrote blog posts explaining in practical terms what the 2026 theme and client and patient safety mean and how they are reflected in their work. Each post also included lessons that could be applied more widely across the Wellbeing Services County.

Blog posts published on the Wellbeing Services County website:

Siun sote celebrates Client and Patient Safety Week, 14–20 September 2026
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/siun-sote-viettaa-asiakas-ja-potilasturvallisuusviikkoa-14-20-9-2026/

Can you hear me? Hearing loss is also a patient safety issue
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/kuuletko-minua-kuulonalenema-on-myos-potilasturvallisuuskysymys/

Early identification and treatment of kidney disease are important
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/munuaistaudin-varhainen-tunnistaminen-ja-hoito-on-tarkeaa/

3.5 billion reasons to take care of oral health
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/35-miljardia-syyta-huolehtia-suun-terveydesta/

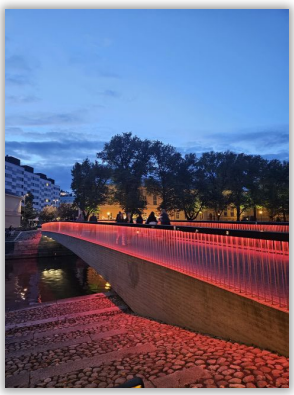
Preventive substance abuse work is part of client and patient safety
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/ehkaiseva-paihdetyo-on-osa-asiakas-ja-potilasturvallisuutta/

Building the future of nursing: specialised expertise in chronic diseases in North Karelia
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/tulevaisuuden-hoitotyota-rakentamassa-kansansairauksien-erityisosaamista-pohjois-karjalaan/

A safe everyday life with a chronic disease is built on a well-functioning service pathway: experiences from the PALVA project
https://www.siunsote.fi/2026/09/turvallinen-arki-pitkaaikaissairauden-kanssa-rakentuu-toimivasta-palveluketjusta-kokemuksia-palva-hankkeesta/

Wellbeing Services County of Southwest Finland

The 2026 theme of Client and Patient Safety Day was “Safe care and services for people with chronic diseases”. A public event related to the theme was organised at Skanssi. Several units from the Wellbeing Services County and patient organisations also participated. In the evening, the Library Bridge was illuminated in the theme colour.



Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia

Client and Patient Safety Day was observed in the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia on 17 September 2026. Lobby events were organised at Vaasa Central Hospital and at the health and social services centres in Närpes and Jakobstad. The two-day 8th National Client and Patient Safety Seminar was also held at Vaasa Central Hospital on 17–18 September 2026 as a hybrid event. The seminar was organised by the Finnish Centre for Client and Patient Safety.

During the day, clients, patients, family members, and professionals in the region had the opportunity to meet a total of 17 associations and other organisations and to receive information about safe care and services for people with chronic diseases.

At the lobby event in Vaasa, videos providing guidance on diabetes care were shown. In the afternoon, the NoVa Teaching Clinic offered visitors blood pressure and blood glucose measurements. To mark the day, the H Building at Vaasa Central Hospital was illuminated in orange in the evening.

During the week, the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia published a video produced by its Diabetes Unit, in which professionals discussed important aspects of diabetes care. The video was viewed more than 14,000 times on Instagram and Facebook. On the Safety 360 intranet site, the weekly theme addressed clients' and patients' rights and participation in their own care.

OLKA Ostrobothnia

Local associations were invited to participate in the joint theme day at OLKA points in Jakobstad and Närpes and in the T Lobby at Vaasa Central Hospital.

The following associations participated:

VAASA

- Pohjanmaan Syöpäyhdistys ry – Österbottens Cancerförening
- Vaasan Seudun Kuuloyhdistys ry – Vasanejdens Hörselförening
- Synförbundet
- Härmän Kuntoutus – Härmä Rehab
- Etelä-Pohjanmaan AVH-yhdistys ry / Vaasan AVH-kerho
- Vaasanseudun Psoriasisyhdistys - Vasanejdens Psoriasisförening
- FinFami Pohjanmaa – FinFami Österbotten
- Hörselföreningen i Vasanejden
- Pohjanmaan Yhdistykset / OLKA-toiminta – Österbottens Föreningar / OLKA-verksamheten

PIETARSAARI-JAKOBSTAD

- Jakobstadsnejdens Hjärtförening
- Norra Österbottens Svenska Synskadade
- Reumaföreningen Verna – Reumayhdistys Verna
- Pohjanmaan Syöpäyhdistys – Österbottens Cancerförening
- Keski-Pohjanmaan Neuroyhdistys ry – Mellersta Österbottens Neuroförening

NÄRPIÖ-NÄRPES

- FinFami Pohjanmaa – FinFami Österbotten

Source note

This English document is a translation of the Finnish report “Raportti maailman potilasturvallisuuspäivän vietosta Suomessa 17.9.2026”. Organisation names have been retained in their original Finnish and/or Swedish forms where an official English name was not provided in the source report.