

Patient Safety, Pragmatism and General Practice

Dr. John Brennan
Patient Safety in the Community 2026

Photo by Patrick Donald

I have no conflicts of interest to declare

29 million

3496

90/90

13.7

4.34

Seven Domains of Healthcare Quality

Sustainable

Safe

Person Centred

Timely

Equitable

Effective

Efficient

High Quality Primary Care

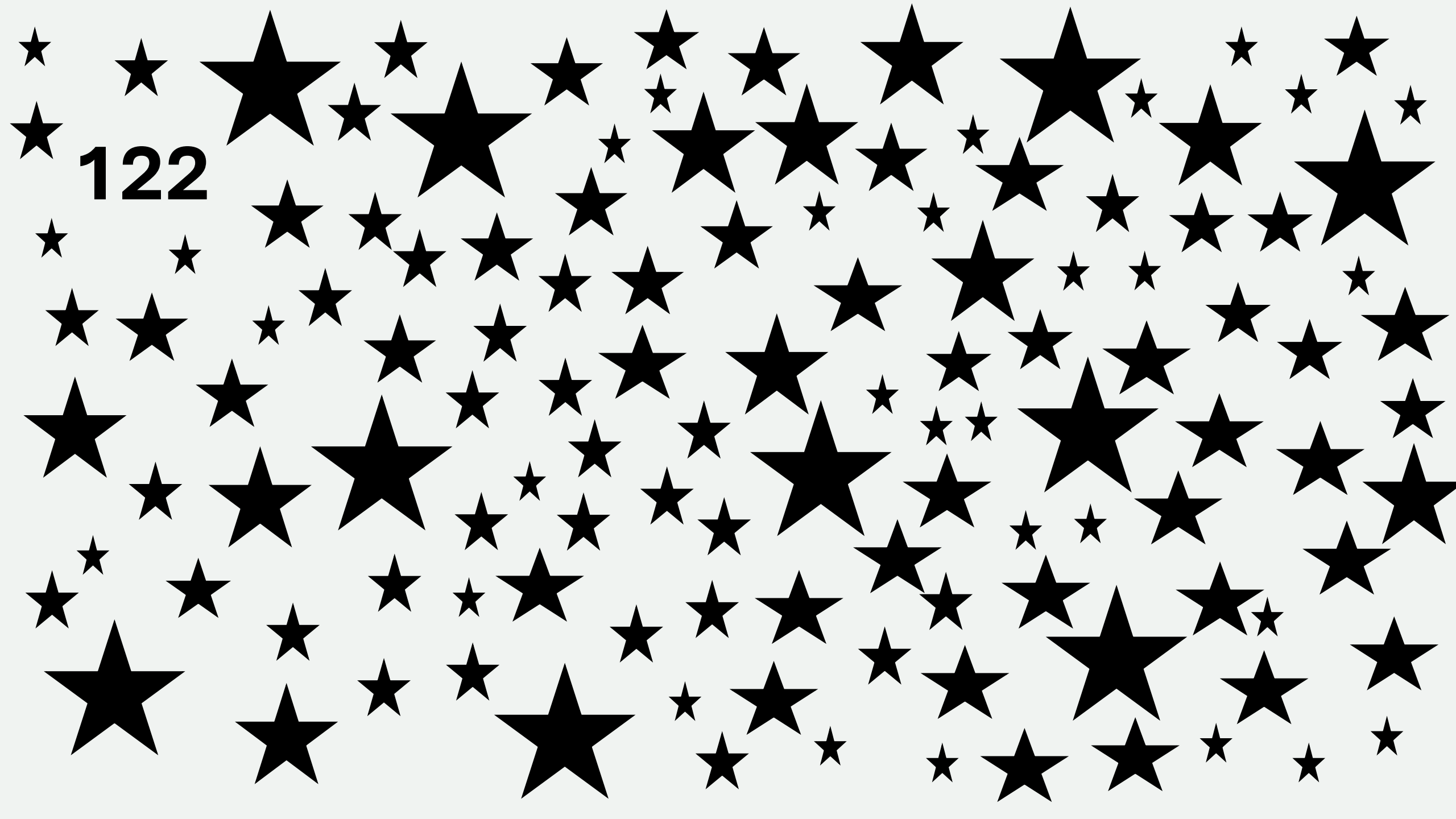


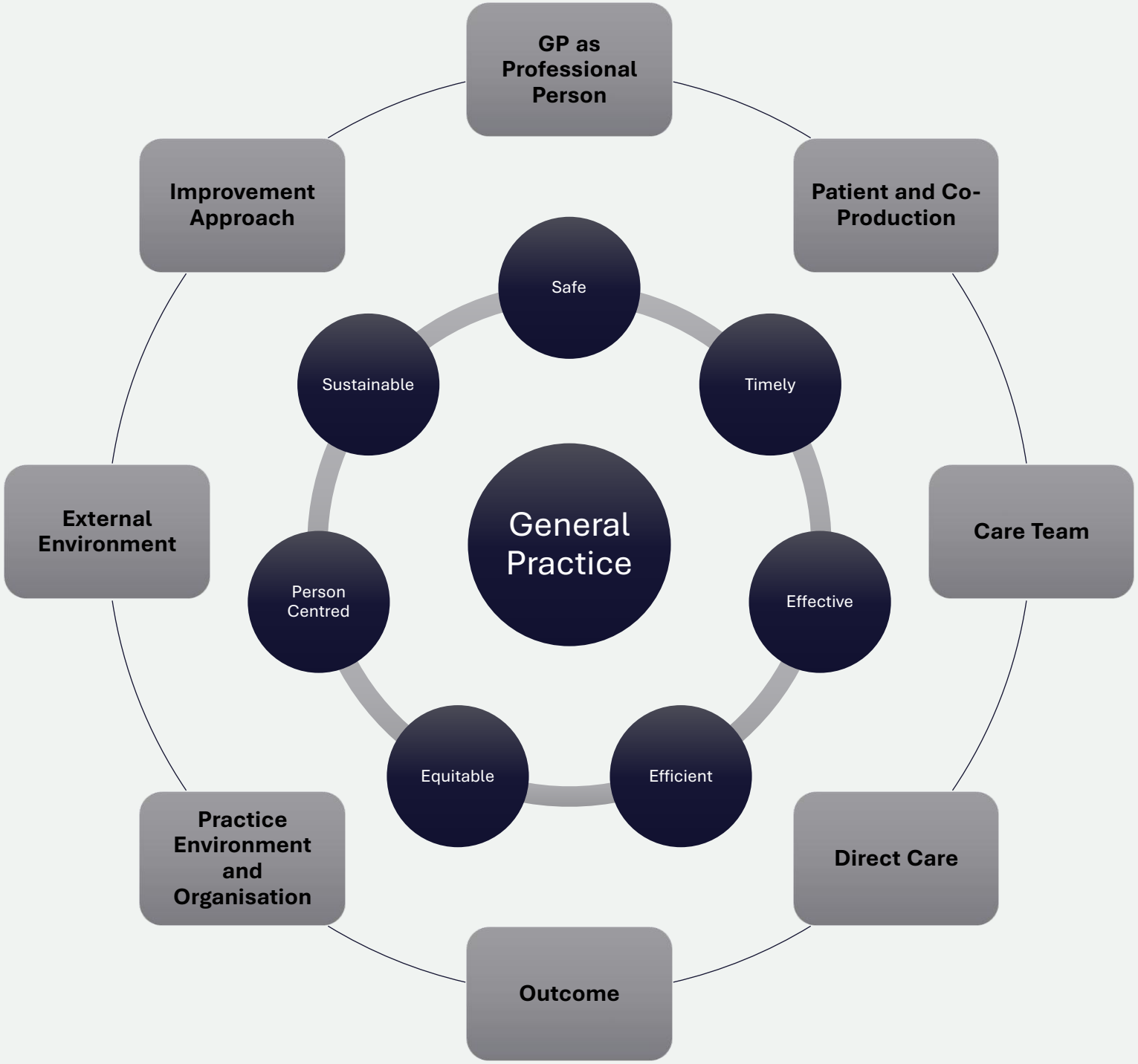
Hirschhorn

What are the big patient safety challenges in GP?

- Prescribing and medicines management
- Diagnostics and diagnosis
- Communication and handover
- Out of hours and unscheduled care
- Environment and human factors

Three Systems Stories


122



Theory of Assessing Quality in General Practice

“You're not there just to get through the numbers and it is a balancing act. I think it's tricky…..you know, you can sit there for 40 minutes talking to every patient. That's not a financially viable model. It's also not a very satisfactory way to work. You know, you want to feel like you're, you know, you're being productive, being efficient, getting work done.”

Complexity

Continuity

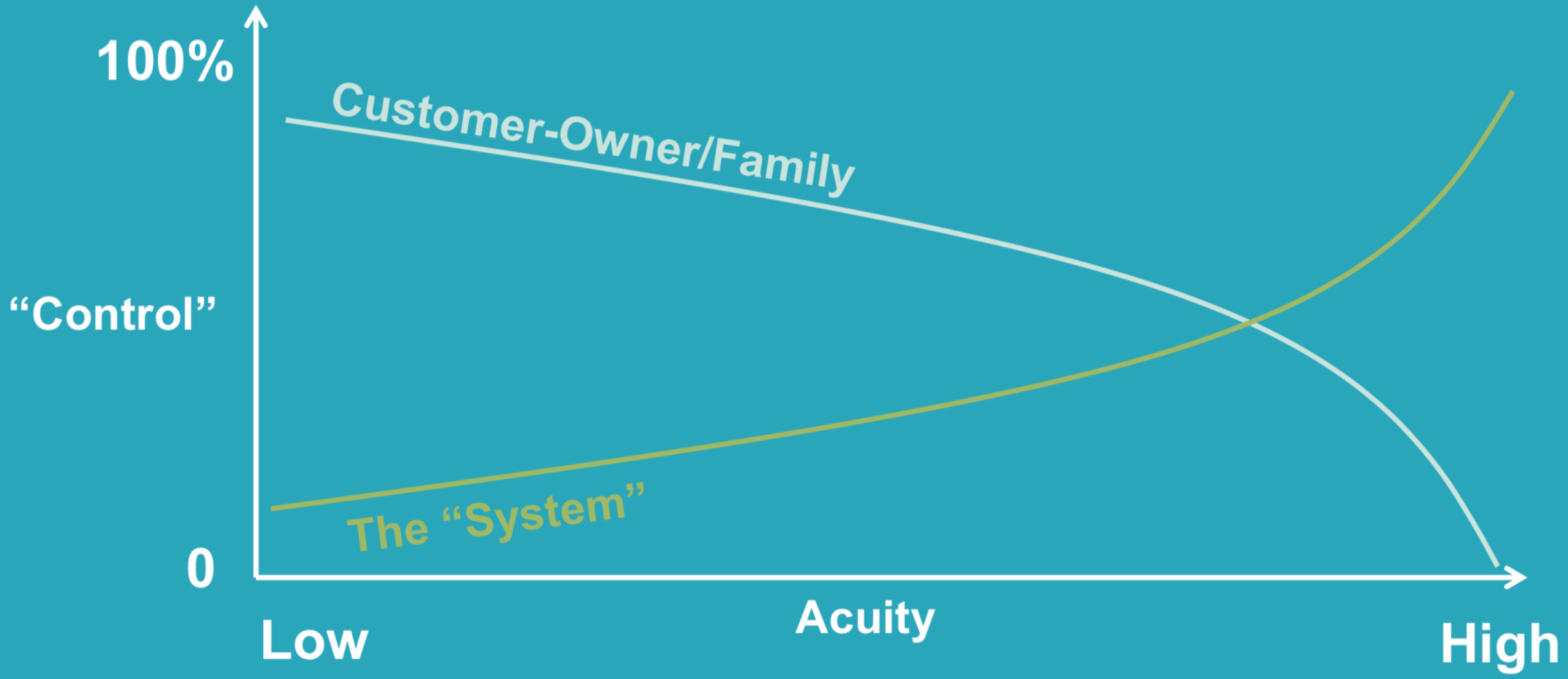
Lau RS, Boesen ME, Richer L, Hill MD. Siloed mentality, health system suboptimization and the healthcare symphony: a Canadian perspective. Health Res Policy Syst. 2024 Jul 17;22(1):87.

Pereira Gray DJ, Sidaway-Lee K, White E, Thorne A, Evans PH. Continuity of care with doctors-a matter of life and death? A systematic review of continuity of care and mortality. BMJ Open. 2018 Jun 28;8(6):e021161.

Sandvik H, Hetlevik Ø, Blinkenberg J, Hunskaar S. Continuity in general practice as predictor of mortality, acute hospitalisation, and use of out-of-hours care: a registry-based observational study in Norway. Br J Gen Pract. 2022 Jan 27;72(715):e84-e90.

Who really makes the decisions?

D Eby, Southcentral Foundation



Reliability

A preoccupation with failure

Sensitivity to operations

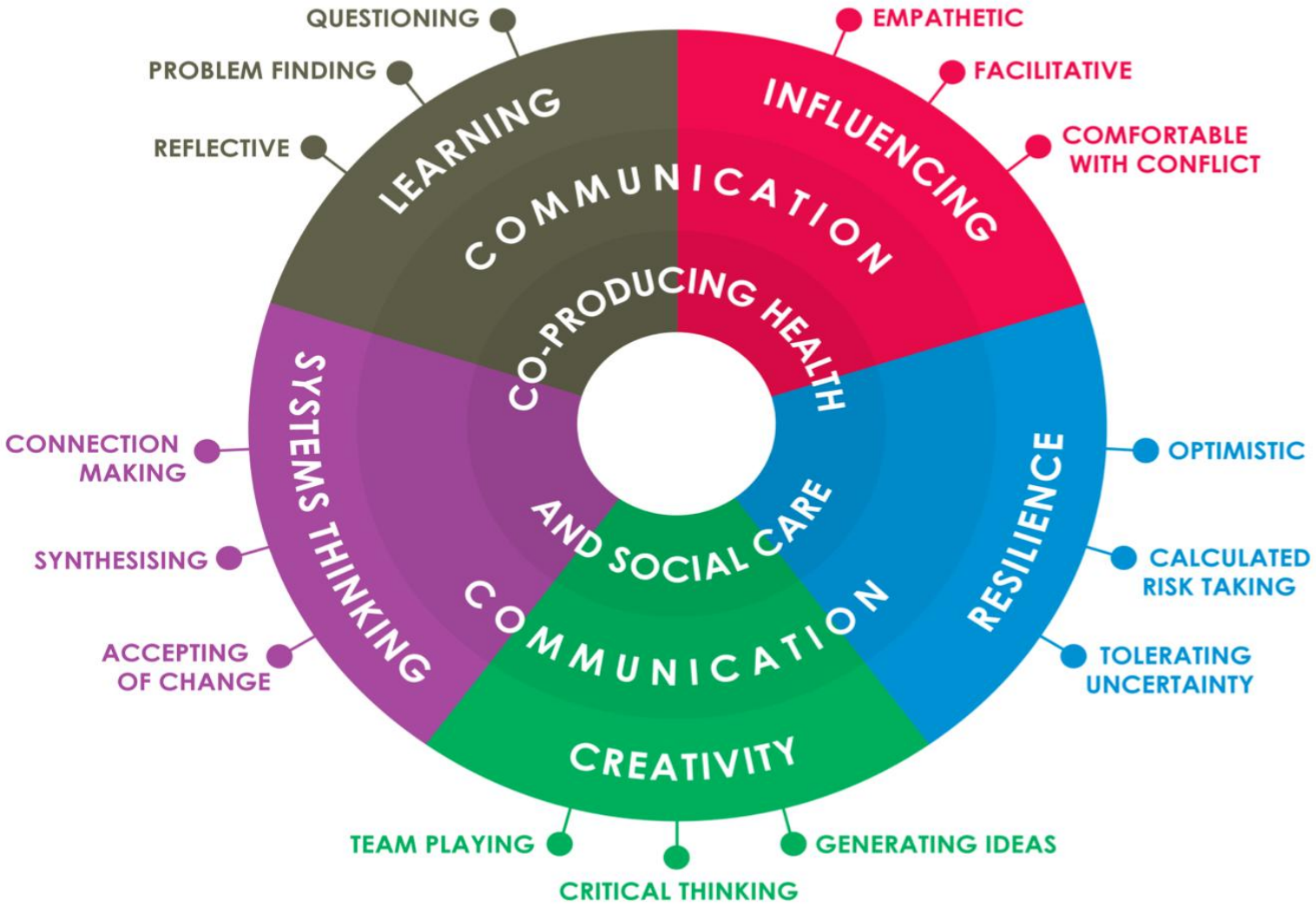
Deference to expertise

Reluctance to simplify interpretations of issues or risks

Commitment to resilience

Weick and Sutcliffe, 2007

Habits of an Improver



Lucas B. BMJ Qual Saf 2015;0:1–4.
doi:10.1136/bmjqs-2015-005086

Pragmatic Patient Safety in General Practice is.....

- **Complex**
- **Continuous**
- **Reliable**

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