Minute QI: Hollnagel's Theory of Health Care System Resilience (Safety I & II)

Safety-I and Safety-II are two perspectives on understanding and managing safety within complex systems, such as healthcare. These concepts were introduced by Erik Hollnagel, a prominent researcher in the field of human factors and safety engineering.

1. Safety-I:
   Safety-I, often referred to as the traditional view of safety, focuses on the prevention of negative outcomes or accidents.
   It assumes that safety is achieved by eliminating errors and failures.
   Safety-I emphasizes compliance with rules and procedures, investigating adverse events, and implementing corrective actions to prevent recurrence.
   In healthcare, Safety-I approaches typically involve root cause analysis, incident reporting, and a focus on reducing errors and harm to patients.

2. Safety-II:
   Safety-II represents a newer perspective that acknowledges the complexity and adaptability of systems.
   Rather than focusing solely on failures and adverse events, Safety-II seeks to understand how systems function successfully under varying conditions and pressures.
   It recognizes that humans are a crucial part of the system and can adapt and innovate to maintain safety in complex and dynamic environments.
   Safety-II encourages learning from both successes and failures, understanding how performance variability can contribute to resilience, and identifying ways to enhance system flexibility and adaptability.
   In healthcare, Safety-II approaches may involve studying how healthcare professionals adapt to unexpected situations, identifying strengths and resources within the system, and promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Overall, Safety-I and Safety-II are complementary perspectives that offer different insights into safety management. While Safety-I focuses on preventing failures and minimizing harm, Safety-II emphasizes understanding how systems function successfully and promoting resilience in the face of complexity and uncertainty. Integrating both perspectives can lead to a more comprehensive approach to safety management in healthcare and other high-risk industries.