



## Health Watch USA's Initiatives and Accomplishments

Since Health Watch USA's founding over a decade ago, there have been extensive changes in our healthcare system with the formulation of new healthcare policies along with new healthcare problems. Health Watch USA has been at the forefront of these policy transformations and has participated in presidential committee public comments, newspaper reports and investigations, peer-reviewed healthcare policy publications along with testimony before the Kentucky State Legislature. In addition, Health Watch USA has been represented on AHRQ strategic working groups and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Technical Expert Panels.

Below is a list of some of the major policies Health Watch USA has influenced along with listings of related articles, reports and presentations. (Additional presentations and resources on these topics can be found at [www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) and [www.healthconference.org](http://www.healthconference.org) .

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## #1. Transparency and Value Based Purchasing

Value Based Purchasing is a concept founded in free enterprise. It is based on the power of the consumer to choose care and to promote high quality with low prices, based upon knowledge of the cost and quality of different competing providers. Insurance companies and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have implemented these principles with some success. However, for consumers there is a veil of secrecy over the cost of services and too few providers for adequate choices. Even the data on healthcare quality is muddled. For example, as discussed in the below article, the health care industry cannot even agree on the large number of preventable deaths. When they occur too many excuses are given and they are often discounted.

Kavanagh KT, Saman DM, Bartel R, Westerman K. Estimating deaths due to hospital-related medical error: A perspective from patient advocates. *Journal of Patient Safety*. 2017 Feb 9; 13(1):1-5.  
[http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Abstract/2017/03000/Estimating\\_Hospital\\_Related\\_Deaths\\_Due\\_to\\_Medical.1.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Abstract/2017/03000/Estimating_Hospital_Related_Deaths_Due_to_Medical.1.aspx)

### A. Medicaid Adoption of Medicare Rules Regarding the Nonpayment of Never Events.

One of the first initiatives which Health Watch USA undertook was to be an initiator and facilitator of this initiative on a national level with activities involving conference presentations, forming partnerships with patient advocacy organizations, and advocacy on Capitol Hill. This effort started in the Spring of 2008 and was promoted in the 2008 Health Watch USA fall conference. Ken Conner, JD, presented on Medicare and Medicaid nonpayment of never events. Lisa McGiffert from Consumer Union also presented and after the conference joined with Health Watch USA and advanced on Capitol Hill the policy of Medicaid Adopting Medicare Regulations regarding Nonpayment of Never Events.

This provision was signed into Federal Law in the 2010 Healthcare Reform Bill by President Barack Obama on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. Consumer Union played a major role in advancing and advocating for this legislation.

On July 1, 2010 Kentucky Medicaid adopted regulations for the nonpayment of never events and hospital acquired conditions.

### B. Public Availability of Hospital Accreditation Surveys.

Hospital accreditation results contain the most basic information which patients and consumers need and have the right to know about hospitals. This information is hidden and there is even a passage in the Social Security Act which prevents the Dept. of Health and Human Services from releasing hospital accreditation surveys. Health Watch USA has been at the forefront of this issue as early as 2011.

In Apr. 2017: CMS published a proposed regulation to require healthcare facility accrediting organizations to make accrediting surveys available to the public. Part of the

justification given was the high disparity rate between surveys performed by accrediting organizations and follow-up surveys performed by CMS. However, the final regulation in August withdrew this section stating that it “may appear as if CMS was attempting to circumvent the provision of section 1865(b) of the (Social Security) Act.” View Page 38498 to 38499 on this topic: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/08/14/2017-16434/medicare-program-hospital-inpatient-prospective-payment-systems-for-acute-care-hospitals-and-the>

1. Support letter for the 2017 proposed regulation which was signed by over 50 patient advocate/advocate organizations along with business purchasing alliances. View Letter: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20170504-CMS-Hospital-AO-Transparency-Support-Letter.pdf>
2. Sep. 2011: Call for Repeal of the Provision in the Social Security Act Which Prevents the U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services from making public hospital accreditation surveys.
  - Letter signed by over 50 patient advocates and advocate organizations to Senator Harkin. View Letter to Senator Harkin: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20170504-CMS-Hospital-AO-Transparency-Support-Letter.pdf>
  - Letter signed by 20 business healthcare purchasing alliances to Senator McConnell. View letter to Senator McConnell: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20170504-CMS-Hospital-AO-Transparency-Support-Letter.pdf>  
CMS Response to Senator McConnell’s Enquiry: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20111121-CMS-response.pdf>
  - The Joint Commission's Response. View Letter: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20120402-TJC-Letter.pdf>

**C. Transparency of Healthcare Acquired Infections. See Infection Control Section on Kentucky Reporting of Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms, Page 13.**

**D. Value Based Purchasing.**

Value Based Purchasing is when the consumer or patient obtains the highest quality and lowest cost for healthcare services. Thus, obtaining services with a high value. Health Watch USA has been one of the leaders in Value Based Purchasing for over a decade. On Aug. 22, 2017, Health Watch USA was [designated a Community Leader](#) for Value-Driven Health Care by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Michael Leavitt.

Health Watch has published numerous articles on quality measurements to be used for Value Based Purchasing (See page 12). In addition, the organization has written several peer-reviewed articles on this topic, including a number of letters and articles regarding the reason for failure of the nonpayment of hospital acquired conditions initiative. The failure was due to only scant penalties being levied due to the type of payment system which Medicare utilizes (payments based upon diagnoses – Drug Related Groups or DRG).

### **Peer-Reviewed Articles Regarding Value Based Purchasing**

- Kavanagh KT. Financial Incentives to Promote Health Care Quality: The Hospital Acquired Conditions Nonpayment Policy. *Soc Work Public Health*. 2011 Aug 31;26(5):524-41. PMID: 21902485
- Kavanagh KT, Cimiotti JP, Abusalem S and Coty MB. Moving Healthcare Quality Forward With Nursing-Sensitive Value-Based Purchasing. *Journal of Nursing J Nurs Scholarsh*. 2012 Dec;44(4):385-95. doi: 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01469.x. Epub 2012 Oct 15. PMID: 23066956 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01469.x/full>

### **Peer-Reviewed Articles and Letters Regarding Flaws in The Nonpayment for Adverse Events Initiative**

- Kavanagh KT. A comment on: Jha AK, Joynt KE, Orav EJ, Epstein AM. The Long-Term Effect of Premier Pay for Performance on Patient Outcomes. *N Engl J Med*. 2012 Apr 26;366(17):1606-15. Epub 2012 Mar 28. PMID: 22455751; *N Engl J Med*. July 26, 2012; 367:381-383. PMID: 22830476
- Kavanagh KT. A comment on: Lee GM, Kleinman K, Soumerai SB, Tse A, Cole D, Fridkin SK, Horan T, Platt R, Gay C, Kassler W, Goldmann DA, Jernigan J, Jha AK. Effect of nonpayment for preventable infections in U.S. hospitals. *N Engl J Med*. 2012 Oct 11;367(15):1428-37. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2013; Jan. 368:191-192. PMID: 23301747
- Kavanagh KT. Letter to the editor regarding: The effectiveness of Medicare's non-payment of hospital-acquired conditions policy. *Health Policy*. Aug 27, 2014. PMID: 25201486 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2014.08.006>  
<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/PDF-Downloads/20140829-JHP-HAC-Letter.pdf>

## Presentations Regarding Value Based Purchasing

- Leah Binder, The Leapfrog Hospital Ranking System. Leah Binder, CEO & President the Leapfrog Group and Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA discussed their perspectives on transparency and hospital quality ratings <https://youtu.be/DsGvX50jZqg>

## OpEds Regarding Value Based Purchasing of Hospital Care

- Kavanagh KT. Choosing a hospital? Read this first. Lexington Herald Leader. Feb. 2, 2017. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article130669754.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Buyer beware: no return, redo in hospital care. Lexington Herald Leader. Jan. 15, 2016. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article54997560.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Ky. voices: Health-care nonprofits may not be what they seem. Herald Leader. Mar. 27, 2015. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44563452.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Tough Diagnosis: Hospital rankings. Lexington Herald Leader. May 12, 2013. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44423742.html>
- Kavanagh KT, Saman DM. Consumers must scrutinize details of hospital rankings. Herald Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, Nov. 7, 2012. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44388219.html>

## E. The Certificate of Need.

In many states, permission has to be granted to build a hospital. A certificate of need must be awarded by the State to allow a new hospital to be built or for a competitor to enter into the market. Reduced competition has not been shown to save healthcare dollars. In contradistinction, a 2010 Report by Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley found "Price variations are correlated to market leverage as measured by the relative market position of the hospital or provider group compared with other hospitals or provider groups within a geographic region or within a group of academic medical centers." <http://www.mass.gov/ago/docs/healthcare/2011-hcctd-full.pdf>

The following have been areas of awareness regarding the CON which Health Watch USA has undertaken:

### Presentations

1. Joseph Miller, Assistant Chief, Anti-Trust Division Office of the US Assistant Attorney General. Presents on The Certificate of Need and Anti-Trust Issues. Health Watch USA Conference Nov. 13, 2009. View YouTube Video <https://youtu.be/W0kB2nyB40M>
2. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS. The presentation discusses how once "need" has been determined, Certificates of Need should be placed up for bid and the money raised should be used to match Federal Medicaid Funds for indigent care. Health Watch USA

Conference. Nov. 20, 2008. View YouTube Video [https://youtu.be/QVq\\_1s94TGQ](https://youtu.be/QVq_1s94TGQ)

### OpEds in State Newspapers

1. Kavanagh KT. Kentucky Should Award CONs so All Hospital Systems in The State Benefit, Not Just One Medical News - The Business of Healthcare, Louisville, KY, March. 12, 2010 [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/20100312-CON-MedicalNews.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/20100312-CON-MedicalNews.pdf)
2. Kavanagh KT. Poor Way to Decide Who Gets Hospitals. Lexington Herald Leader. Lexington KY. Jan. 11, 2010. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2010-1-CON-LHL.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2010-1-CON-LHL.pdf)
3. Kavanagh KT. Kentucky's Certificate of Need Process Needs Overhauling. Courier Journal. Louisville, Ky. Jan. 5, 2009. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2009-1-CON.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2009-1-CON.pdf)
4. Kavanagh KT. The CON Steals Jessamine's Health Care Access. Jessamine Journal. Nicholasville, Ky. April 12, 2007. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2007-5\\_Jessamine\\_CON-L.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2007-5_Jessamine_CON-L.pdf)
5. Kavanagh KT. Certificate of Need Unneeded. Lexington Herald Leader. Nov. 13, 2006. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2006-8\\_CON\\_Unneeded-L.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2006-8_CON_Unneeded-L.pdf)
6. Kavanagh KT. State Blocking Competition. Lexington Herald Leader. July 31, 2006. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2006-7\\_State\\_Blocking-L.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2006-7_State_Blocking-L.pdf)
7. Kavanagh KT. Certificate of Monopoly. Courier Journal. June 22, 2006. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2006-1\\_KY\\_Health\\_Plan-L.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2006-1_KY_Health_Plan-L.pdf)

## #2. The Decrease in Hospital Acquired Infections and Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms.

Healthcare policy for the prevention of infectious diseases has appeared to have taken the path of least resistance, and least cost and effort. The downplaying of research evidence supporting resource intense interventions such as surveillance and isolation along with the promotion of recommendations whose effectiveness has come into questions and many of whose proponents have conflicts-of-interest have derailed the United States efforts to confront this epidemic. Health Watch USA has published multiple peer-reviewed articles regarding the research integrity and policy formulation on the effectiveness of surveillance and isolation of MRSA carriers and unit-wide universal daily chlorhexidine bathing for the prevention of MRSA infections. These reports culminated in a Reuters Investigation regarding conflicts-of-interest and the distortion of healthcare policy recommendations for infectious disease.

- Nelson DJ, McNeill R. Money from infection-control industry muddies research into beating back superbugs Reuters News Service. Apr. 7, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-superbugs-research/>

The lack of effective standards for infectious disease has had far reaching implications and became evident during the Ebola epidemic.

- Kavanagh KT. How Ebola reveals scary gaps in U.S. health care. Lexington Herald Leader. Oct 12, 2014. <http://www.kentucky.com/2014/10/12/3476736/ky-voices-dr-kevin-kavanagh-on.html>

**Comments summarizing many of Health Watch USA's policy points were given as public comments before the President's Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria (PACCARB). These presentations are listed below:**

- Kavanagh KT. Health Watch USA comments on research integrity, conflicts-of-interest, the need for firm standards, the tying of antibiotic stewardship to funds for antibiotic development and public reporting of antibiotic provider utilization data. Presidential Advisory Council for Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria. Sep. 29, 2015. Washington DC. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/b67J-X5c8gU>
- Dr. Kevin Kavanagh's comments regarding chlorhexidine, surveillance and public disclosure of conflicts of interest in the confrontation of the antibiotic bacterial resistance epidemic. Presidential Advisory Council for Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria. Mar. 30, 2016. Washington DC. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/iG1aQZftqb0>
- Kavanagh KT. Health Watch USA Comments on the importance of preventing patient-to-patient transmission. Presidential Advisory Council for Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria. Mar. 31, 2016. Washington DC. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/-IB1qF1qP48>
- Kavanagh KT. Health Watch USA Comments on the importance of preventing the transmission of resistant bacteria between patients. In addition, the importance of nursing, worker safety and carrier surveillance was stressed. Attention was also drawn to polymyxin B

in topical over-the-counter antibiotics as a possible cause of resistance to colistin. Presidential Advisory Council for Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria Jun. 21, 2016. Washington DC. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/t2LM9luN7fQ>

- Kavanagh KT. Health Watch USA Comments at the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria. "The committee needs to ensure that our healthcare institutions make the needed investments in prevention and patient safety, along with setting well-defined standards for screening, isolation, environmental cleaning, appropriate staffing and worker safety. Sept. 19, 2016. Washington, DC. "YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/RGlpKY1L-S4>
- Kavanagh KT. Health Watch USA Comments at the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria regarding the United States missing goals for reducing MRSA and other resistant pathogens along with the need for a mandatory publicly reported comprehensive surveillance system to track multi-drug resistant organisms. Jan. 25, 2017. YouTube Video: [https://youtu.be/hbdXX3a\\_OIY](https://youtu.be/hbdXX3a_OIY)

## A. Promotion of the Control of MRSA.

### 1. The Unfounded Mitigation of the Effectiveness of Surveillance and Isolation for the Control of MRSA Caused from Problems in Research Interpretation and Integrity.

Unlike Northern Europe, the United States' private health care system felt research supporting the efficacy of surveillance and isolation for the prevention of MRSA was lacking. Studies which supported this intervention were stated to be inadequate and two severely flawed studies finding no effect were touted as excellent research. Only the VA System took the path of using systemwide implementation of Surveillance and Isolation. Even a Senatorial office got involved with an official inquiry to obtain the results from the VA System. Years later, with tens of thousands, maybe 100,000s of preventable deaths, Europe and the VA System have over a 70% decrease in MRSA Infection. However, the epidemic still rages in the private U.S. healthcare system and even the numbers are not known for sure because of a flawed tracking system. Below is a list of peer-reviewed articles Health Watch USA has published on this subject, articles in the lay press and a number of Op-Eds in Kentucky State newspapers.

- Kavanagh KT, Abusalem S, Calderon LE. The incidence of MRSA infections in the United States. Is a more comprehensive tracking system needed? Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control. April 7, 2017. 6:34 DOI: 10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0 <https://aricjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0>

### Peer-Reviewed Medical Publications Regarding Surveillance and Isolation/Decolonization of MRSA Carriers:

- Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE and Saman DM Viewpoint: a response to "Screening and isolation to control methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus: sense, nonsense, and evidence" Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control 2015, 4:4 (5 February 2015) <http://www.aricjournal.com/content/4/1/4>



- Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE, Saman DM, Abusalem SK. The use of surveillance and preventative measures for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus infections in surgical patients. *Antimicrob Resist Infect Control*. 2014 May 14;3:18. eCollection 2014. PMID: 24847437 <http://www.aricjournal.com/content/3/1/18>
- Kavanagh KT, Saman DM, Yu Y. A Perspective on How the United States Fell behind Northern Europe in the Battle against Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus. 4. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother*. 2013 Dec;57(12):5789-91. doi: 10.1128/AAC.01839-13. Epub 2013 Oct 7. PMID: 24100502 <http://aac.asm.org/content/57/12/5789.long>
- Kavanagh K, Abusalem S, Saman DM. A Perspective on the Evidence Regarding Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus Surveillance. *J Patient Saf*. 2012 Sep;8(3):140-3. doi: 10.1097/PTS.0b013e3182627b89. PMID 22874134
- Kavanagh K, Abusalem S. Mounting evidence supports universal surveillance for MRSA in preoperative patients. *J Am Col Surg*. 2011 Aug;213(2):335-6. PMID: 21787990

### **Op-Eds Regarding Control of MRSA and Surveillance and Isolation**

- Kavanagh KT. Dr. Kevin Kavanagh says hospitals should act as Ky. falls on key infection ranking *Lexington Herald Leader*. June 18, 2015 <http://www.kentucky.com/2015/06/17/3905753/ky-voices-dr-kevin-kavanagh-says.html>

### **AHRQ Analysis of MRSA Surveillance and Isolation:**

- Comment on AHRQ Document Which Did Not Make Recommendations Regarding Surveillance and Isolation. March 2012: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20120325-4L-MRSA-CommentLetter-Final.pdf>

## **2. The Overstatement of The Efficacy of Universal Daily Antiseptic Bathing Associated with Conflicts of Interest and Research Integrity Problems.**

The medical industry also has proposed daily bathing of all patients in a hospital with the antiseptic chlorhexidine for the prevention of MRSA. This initiative has its roots in a study conducted at HCA and funded by AHRQ and the CDC. Not only were there concerns regarding scientific integrity problems with the underlying research but the recommended protocol was FDA contraindicated (FDA warnings against the type of usage recommended). Health Watch USA has been at the forefront of policy analysis on this topic. Peer-reviewed articles and a Reuter's Investigative Report concerning this protocol are found below.

### **Peer-Reviewed Publications Specific to Integrity Problems Regarding Research Supporting the Infection Control Policy of Universal Daily Chlorhexidine Bathing.**

- Kavanagh KT, Saman DM, Yu Y. A Perspective on How the United States Fell Behind Northern Europe in the Battle against Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus.

Antimicrob Agents Chemother. 2013 Dec;57(12):5789-91. doi: 10.1128/AAC.01839-13. Epub 2013 Oct 7. PMID: 24100502 <http://aac.asm.org/content/57/12/5789.long>

- Kavanagh KT, Saman DM, Yu Y. Reply to "Planned Analyses of the REDUCE MRSA Trial". Antimicrob Agents Chemother. 2014 Apr;58(4):2486-7. doi: 10.1128/AAC.02821-13. PMID: 24643844 [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/PDF-Downloads/20140318-Antimicrob\\_Agents\\_Chemother-2014-Kavanagh-2486-7.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/PDF-Downloads/20140318-Antimicrob_Agents_Chemother-2014-Kavanagh-2486-7.pdf)

#### **Newspaper Investigative Reports.**

- Nelson DJ, McNeill R. Money from infection-control industry muddies research into beating back superbugs Reuters News Service. Apr. 7, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-superbugs-research/>

### **3. Research Integrity Involving Infectious Disease and the Antiseptic Chlorhexidine.**

Conflicts-of-interest and research integrity problems have been found to be rampant in the scientific literature. As many as 50% of the published articles are affected. Even the top journal are involved with this problem, for they are often targeted because of their prestige and influence. Major problems in the infectious disease literature have also been found which relates to the control of MRSA and MDROs. Research regarding the antiseptic chlorhexidine has been found to be very problematic. Articles and op-eds discussing this problem are listed below:

#### **Peer Reviewed Articles Regarding Research Integrity with Emphasis on Chlorhexidine.**

- Wu AW, Kavanagh KT, Pronovost PJ, Bates DW. Conflict of interest, dr charles denham and the journal of patient safety. J Patient Saf. 2014 Dec;10(4):181-5. PMID: 25408235 [http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/Conflict\\_of\\_Interest,\\_Dr\\_Charles\\_Denham\\_and\\_the.1.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/Conflict_of_Interest,_Dr_Charles_Denham_and_the.1.aspx)
- Kavanagh KT, Tower SS, Saman DM. A perspective on the principles of integrity in infectious disease research. Journal of Patient Safety. Published Online Mar. 24, 2016. PMID 27010326 [http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2016/06000/A\\_Perspective\\_on\\_the\\_Principles\\_of\\_Integrity\\_in.1.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2016/06000/A_Perspective_on_the_Principles_of_Integrity_in.1.aspx)

#### **Newspaper Investigative Reports.**

- Nelson DJ, McNeill R. Money from infection-control industry muddies research into beating back superbugs Reuters News Service. Apr. 7, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-superbugs-research/>

#### **Op-Eds on Research Integrity.**

- Kavanagh TK. Shoddy research, deadly results. Lexington Herald Leader. July 29, 2017. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article163753803.html>

## **B. The Promotion of Infectious Disease Data Availability and Validity for Policy Formulation.**

### **1. Analysis of Metrics Used For Reporting of Central Line Catheter Infections (CLABSI) and Urinary Catheter Infections (CAUTI).**

Health Watch USA has brought its voice to CMS Technical Expert Panels and AHRQ Strategic Working Groups regarding quality measurements and hospital acquired conditions. HW USA has stressed the importance of patient outcomes (outcome metrics) and especially those which promote good nursing (nursing sensitive). Four related peer-reviewed publications in the medical literature have reviewed the importance of nursing and how to best measure infections from central line catheters and urinary catheters.

#### **Peer-Reviewed Medical Publications:**

- Kavanagh KT, Cimiotti JP, Abusalem S and Coty MB. Moving Healthcare Quality Forward With Nursing-Sensitive Value-Based Purchasing. *Journal of Nursing J Nurs Scholarsh.* 2012 Dec;44(4):385-95. doi: 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01469.x. Epub 2012 Oct 15. PMID: 23066956
- Saman DM, Kavanagh KT (corresponding author) and Abusalem S. Redefining the Standardized Infection Ratio to Aid in Consumer Value Purchasing. *Journal of Patient Safety.* 2013 Jun;9(2):55-8. PMID: 23370222
- Saman DM, Kavanagh KT. Assessing the Necessity of the Standardized Infection Ratio for Reporting Central Line Associated Bloodstream Infections. *Plos One.* Nov. 4, 2013. PMID 24223966  
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0079554>
- Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE, Saman DM. Research Letter: Much Work Still to Be Done to Prevent Central Line–Associated Bloodstream Infections. *American Journal of Medical Quality* 1062860613513317, first published on December 13, 2013 as doi:10.1177/1062860613513317 PMID: 24335078  
<http://ajm.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/12/13/1062860613513317.extract>
- Calderon LE, Kavanagh KT, Rice MK. Questionable Validity of the Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infection Metric Used for Value Based Purchasing. *American Journal of Infection Control.* Published Online Jul 1, 2015.  
<http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553%2815%2900613-6/fulltext>
- Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE, Rice M. Author's Response to Letter Regarding "Questionable validity of the catheter-associated urinary tract infection metric used for value-based purchasing". *AJIC.* Accepted Dec, 8, 2015, Published Online Jan. 29, 2016. DOI: 10.1016/j.ajic.2015.12.002 PMID: 26827094 <http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196->

[6553%2815%2901229-8/pdf](#)

## 2. Analysis of National Reporting Systems for Hospital Acquired Infections

Health Watch USA has been involved with the evaluation of measurements for Health Care Associated Infections. MRSA is one of the earliest multi-resistant drug organisms to reach epidemic proportions and it is the infection for which abundant data is available. However, the completeness of this data along with the validity needs improvement.

Kavanagh KT, Abusalem S, Calderon LE. The incidence of MRSA infections in the United States. Is a more comprehensive tracking system needed? Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control. April 7, 2017. 6:34 DOI: 10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0  
<https://aricjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0>

### Op-Eds Regarding Metrics and Reporting of Infections:

- Kavanagh KT: The incidence of MRSA infections in the United States: Is a more comprehensive tracking system needed? On Health. BioMed Central. April 10, 2017.  
<http://blogs.biomedcentral.com/on-health/2017/04/10/the-incidence-of-mrsa-infections-in-the-united-states-is-a-more-comprehensive-tracking-system-needed/>
- Kavanagh KT. Needed: Greater Surveillance, New Norms in the Fight Against Antibiotic Resistance Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy. Oct. 8, 2015.  
[http://cddep.org/blog/posts/needed\\_new\\_norms\\_antibiotic\\_resistance\\_surveillance\\_stewardship](http://cddep.org/blog/posts/needed_new_norms_antibiotic_resistance_surveillance_stewardship)
- Saman DM, Kavanagh KT. A tale of two cows: Why we have a cow map and not a healthcare acquired infection map. Centers for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy March 13, 2012.  
[http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/tale\\_two\\_cows\\_why\\_we\\_have\\_cow\\_map\\_and\\_not\\_healthcare\\_acquired\\_infection\\_map](http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/tale_two_cows_why_we_have_cow_map_and_not_healthcare_acquired_infection_map)

## 3. Mandatory Reporting of Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms in Kentucky.

Publicly available data (transparency) regarding infection rates both for the entire nation and at the facility level is imperative for having adequate data to address this epidemic. A recent Health Watch USA analysis concluded that rates of MRSA were not falling as predicted in the United States. And some data indicated that rates for years 2014 to 2015 may even be increasing. These findings were published in a 2017 article in Antimicrobial Research and Infection Control.

- Kavanagh KT, Abusalem S, Calderon LE. The incidence of MRSA infections in the United States. Is a more comprehensive tracking system needed? Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control. April 7, 2017. 6:34 DOI: 10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0  
<https://aricjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13756-017-0193-0>

In addition, Health Watch USA was the driving force behind the adoption of a regulation defining a comprehensive reporting system for multi-drug resistant bacteria in the State of Kentucky. View Regulation and HW USA Comments:

[http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20150113-KY-House-Senate/20141217-902KAR2\\_020-Revised-Comments.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20150113-KY-House-Senate/20141217-902KAR2_020-Revised-Comments.pdf)

### **Testimony Before Kentucky State Legislature for Reporting of Multi-Drug Resistant**

**Organisms:** Health Watch USA has also made multiple testimonies before the Kentucky State Legislature for the promotion of public reporting in the State of Kentucky.

1. 2016, Dec. 14th: Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms - Reporting and Health Dept. Engagement. Kentucky Joint House & Senate Health and Welfare Committee. -- Kevin Kavanagh MD, MS <https://youtu.be/U9GQDudm8w8>
2. 2015, Dec. 16th: Reportable Diseases and Multi-Drug Resistant Bacteria. Kentucky Joint House & Senate Health and Welfare Committee. -- Kevin Kavanagh MD, MS <https://youtu.be/1EGG2cCI3P4>
3. 2015, Jan. 13th: Regulation KAR 902 2 020. Reportable Disease Surveillance. Kentucky Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee. -- Kevin Kavanagh MD, MS <http://youtu.be/OThEKUG5DF8>
4. 2014, Nov. 19th: Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms & Hospital Acquired Conditions. Kentucky Joint House & Senate Health and Welfare Committee. -- Kevin Kavanagh MD, MS <http://youtu.be/OqP0p6OMgsM>
5. 2014, Mar. 13th: Healthcare Acquired Infections & Multi-Resistant Drug Organisms: State of Kentucky House Committee on Health & Welfare. -- Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS This is a short rebuttal to testimony given on Mar. 6th, 2014. <https://youtu.be/hLPVHeZNAYo>
6. 2014, Mar. 6th: Healthcare Acquired Infections & Multi-Resistant Drug Organisms: State of Kentucky House Committee on Health & Welfare. -- Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <https://youtu.be/nVEkbZB1OQE>
7. 2014, Jan. 9th: Healthcare Acquired Infections & Multi-Resistant Drug Organisms: State of Kentucky House Committee on Health & Welfare. -- Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <https://youtu.be/d2fTbnrtsCo>
8. 2013, Jun. 19th: Healthcare Acquired Infections: State of Kentucky Joint Senate & House Committee on Health & Welfare. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20130619-KY-House-Senate/20130619-kavanagh2.htm>

9. 2013, Feb. 14th: Healthcare Acquired Infections & Healthcare Reform: State of Kentucky House Committee on Health & Welfare (Pre-Gavel). Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20130215-KY-House/20130214-kavanagh2.htm>
10. 2011, Dec. 19th: Healthcare Acquired Infections & Public Reporting: State of Kentucky Senate & House Joint Interim Committee on Health & Welfare. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20111219-KY-House-Senate/20111219-kavanagh2.htm>
11. 2011, Aug. 1st: Healthcare Acquired Infections, Impact on the Community: State of Kentucky Senate & House Joint Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20110801-KY-House-Senate/20110801-kavanagh2.htm>
12. 2011, June 21st: Healthcare Acquired Infections, Public Reporting, Surveillance and the Veterans Administration System: State of Kentucky Senate & House Joint Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee. Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20110621-KY-House-Senate/20110621-kavanagh2.htm>
13. 2011, Feb. 10th: Public Reporting of Healthcare Acquired Infections. In support of HB 291 Kentucky State House Health and Welfare Committee: Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20110210-KY-House/kavanagh2.htm>
14. 2010, Oct. 20th: Healthcare Transparency and Public Reporting of Healthcare Acquired Infections. Kentucky State Senate & House Joint Health and Welfare Committee: Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20101020-KY-House-Senate/20101020-KY-HAI-HW-Cmt\\_MPEG4.htm](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20101020-KY-House-Senate/20101020-KY-HAI-HW-Cmt_MPEG4.htm)
15. 2008, Mar. 6th: Public Reporting of Healthcare Acquired Infections and MRSA Surveillance. In support of SB 183. Kentucky State Senate Health and Welfare Committee: Kentucky Senator Vernie McGaha <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Testimony/20080306-KY-Senate/mcgaha/mcgaha-2.htm>

### **Op Eds Published to Promote Public Reporting of Multi-Resistant Organisms**

- Oct. 12, 2014. Dr. Kevin Kavanagh on how Ebola reveals scary gaps in U.S. health care Lexington Herald Leader. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44515170.html>
- Sept. 15, 2014 Beshear moving to protect Kentuckians from health care-associated infections Lexington Herald Leader <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44510355.html>

- Mar. 13, 2014. Mandate reporting of Ky. health-care related infections. Lexington Herald Leader. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44476251.html>
- July 11, 2013. Better monitoring needed in a post-antibiotic era. Lexington Herald Leader. The case is made for public reporting of Healthcare Associated Infections and for Engagement of the Health Department. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44433474.html>
- Mar. 13, 2012. 'A tale of two cows: Why we have a cow map and not a healthcare acquired infection map. Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics and Policy, A parody comparing the availability of data between agriculture and healthcare. View Op-Ed References [http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/tale\\_two\\_cows\\_why\\_we\\_have\\_cow\\_map\\_and\\_not\\_healthcare\\_acquired\\_infection\\_map](http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/tale_two_cows_why_we_have_cow_map_and_not_healthcare_acquired_infection_map)
  - Coverage by William Heisel's Antidote: Spotting MRSA & Other Superbugs. <https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/blogs/2012/03/21/herd-immunity-spotting-mrsa-and-other-uperbugs-should-be-easy-mapping-cows>
  - Coverage by William Heisel's Antidote: Better Definitions and Better Data. <https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/blogs/2012/03/23/herd-immunity-better-definitions-and-better-data-could-help-stop-superbugs>
- Kavanagh KT. More Scrutiny on spread of Infections; Health Care Industry Resists Surveillance. Lexington Herald Leader. Feb. 11, 2013. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44402895.html>
- Jan. 31, 2012. 'Hospital Infections are Underreported. Courier Journal, Louisville, KY, The case is made for Public Reporting and Full Disclosure of Adverse Events and Not to Charge Patients for These Events. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Courier-Journal/20120131-CJ-Hospital\\_Infections\\_Underreported-HWUSA.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Courier-Journal/20120131-CJ-Hospital_Infections_Underreported-HWUSA.pdf)
- Jan. 21, 2011. State Reporting on Hospital Infections - Lax, Dangerous. Lexington Herald Leader, Lexington, KY, As other states are issuing infection reports to the public. Kentuckians are endangered by the lack of reporting and inhibited health department oversight. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44075886.html>
- July 25, 2010. Physician, wash thy hands. (Hospital Acquired Infections Reporting and Kentucky's HAI Health Plan) Lexington Herald Leader, Lexington, KY, The State of Kentucky Needs to require hospitals to report all Hospital Acquired Infections. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2010-4-physician-wash-thy-hands.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2010-4-physician-wash-thy-hands.pdf)
- Oct. 4, 2009. P Keep Public Reporting in Reform Plan - Lexington Herald Leader, Lexington, KY, Public reporting of healthcare acquired infections is now supported by major national medical organizations. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2009-3-](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2009-3-)



[MRSA-HAI-LHL.pdf](#)

- July 9, 2009. Stop Hospital Borne Infections Courier Journal, Louisville, KY, Public reporting of healthcare acquired infections is now in the process of implementation in 27 states. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds\\_HWUSA\\_PDF/2009-2-MRSA-HAI-L.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/Op-Eds_HWUSA_PDF/2009-2-MRSA-HAI-L.pdf)
  - CJ Editor's Comment on HAI: Jul 26, 2009 You should learn the ABSs of HAI and MRSA. Courier Journal. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/downloads/20090727-CJ-MRSA.pdf>

#### #4. The Importance of Nursing in Assurance of Healthcare Quality.

Adequate numbers of highly trained nursing staff are key for the provision of high-quality health care. A commitment to nursing and an optimal work place environment are key to fostering a culture of safety and the avoidance of adverse events. Measurements or “metrics” of adverse events which are highly dependent upon sufficient staffing and a trained nursing staff are called “nursing sensitive”. The promotion of one nursing sensitive metric will often have a positive impact on many others. The peer-reviewed publications below describe the promotion of safe nursing through financial awards and penalties based upon performance as measured using nursing sensitive metrics (1) and also observed that the poor performance in one nursing sensitive metric may predict systemwide problems and poor performance in a variety of metrics (2,3).

##### Peer-Reviewed Medical Publications:

1. Saman DM, Kavanagh KT. Response to Patient Satisfaction as a Possible Indicator of Quality Surgical Care. *JAMA Surgery*. *JAMA Surg*. 2013 Oct 1;148(10):985. doi: 10.1001/jamasurg.2013.3408. PMID: 24132396
2. Saman DM, Kavanagh KT, Johnson B, Lutfiyya MN. Can Inpatient Hospital Experiences Predict Central Line-associated Bloodstream Infections? *PLOS One*. April. 5, 2013. PMID: 2357719
3. Kavanagh KT, Cimiotti JP, Abusalem S and Coty MB. Moving Healthcare Quality Forward With Nursing-Sensitive Value-Based Purchasing. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*. 2012 Dec;44(4):385-95. doi: 10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01469.x. Epub 2012 Oct 15. PMID: 23066956 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01469.x/full>

##### Video YouTube Presentations on Importance of Nursing:

- Safe Nurse Staffing Levels and Patient Safety -- It's Personal ! Deena McCollum, RN relates her experiences she had with the critical care of her father and ensuing death to the importance of having safe staffing levels. She stresses that safe staffing is a prerequisite to the avoidance of medical errors and delayed treatment. Health Watch USA 2016 Conference. <https://youtu.be/TS-ZMKnXLGo>
- Jeannie Cimiotti, PhD, RN, FAAN Nursing Burnout and the Importance of a Culture of Safety. Health Watch USA 2013 Conference. [https://youtu.be/8\\_YbwFnATME](https://youtu.be/8_YbwFnATME)
- Jeannie Cimiotti, PhD, RN, FAAN Nursing Workforce and Quality of Care. Health Watch USA 2010 Conference. <https://youtu.be/mccaerlHkUk>

**Op-Eds Regarding the Importance of Nursing:**

- Kavanagh KT. Investigate staffing, infection rates at UK hospital – Herald Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44124081.html>
- Kavanagh KT. UK Wrong To Downplay Loss of Nursing Honor – Herald Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, Mar. 21, 2011 . <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44085474.html>

## #5. Medical Device Safety.

Health Watch USA has been very active regarding the issue of Medical Device Safety. We have promoted public awareness of safety problems, lack of testing of new devices due to the 510K approval process, along with inadequate post market monitoring of adverse events. The following are a few of our sponsored presentations and OpEds.

### OpEds - Medical Device Safety

- Kavanagh KT: Without more monitoring, medical devices will keep harming patients. Lexington Herald Leader. Aug. 13, 2015. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44615532.html>

### Presentations – Medical Device Safety

- Joleen Chambers from FiDA (FAILED Implant Device Alliance) discusses several dangerous medical devices along with the lack of sufficient testing and post-market follow-up. Health Watch USA Meeting. Jun. 21, 2017. <https://youtu.be/k1tA3H7i3s0>
- Evidence Mounts That Some Hip Implants Are Toxic to The Brain. News Release. June 6, 2017. View Release: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Initiatives/PDF-Downloads/20170606-NewsRelease-Cobaltism-14385830.pdf>
- Amanda Rusmisell, The Essure Problems Group and Dangers Associated With the Essure Contraceptive device. Health Watch USA Meeting. Jan. 18, 2017. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/zSVe5MQLTeA>
- Dr. Stephen Tower, Complications of Wear or Corrosion of Chromic-Cobalt Hip Implants. Health Watch USA Conference. Nov. 4, 2016. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/CpaQliphWAM>
- Dr. Hooman Noorchashm & Dr. Amy Reed on Uterine Morcellation and The Spreading of Cancer: Jack Pattie Radio Show / Webcast. May 12, 2015. YouTube Video <http://youtu.be/IY4sFn5hybg>
- Lawrence F Muscarella, PhD on the Prevention of Transmission of the ‘Superbug’ Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) during Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. 2015, May 15. LFM Healthcare Solutions, LLC. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/20150415-CRE-Endoscopes/20150515-Muscarella.htm>
- Dr. Stephen Tower, on the epidemiology and mechanisms of failure of total hip arthroplasty and associated heavy metal poisoning. Health Watch USA Conference. Nov. 7, 2014. YouTube Video: [http://youtu.be/j0t\\_Kv3k70Y](http://youtu.be/j0t_Kv3k70Y)
- Collage of Patients Developing Advanced Stage Cancer from Uterine Morcellation. Dr. Hooman Noorchashm and Dr. Amy Reed on the dangers of Uterine Morcellation: Health Watch USA Meeting. June 25, 2014.

- Segment 1: Hooman Noorchashm MD, PhD on the morcellation disaster: A root cause analysis and perspective. YouTube Video: <http://youtu.be/n6226ic0Mpk>
- Segment 2: Amy J. Reed MD, PhD on the morcellation disaster: A physician, patient, and mother of six, gives her personal perspective. YouTube Video: <http://youtu.be/glwxfkXGekw>
- Segment 3: Dr Noorchashm presents his research and perspective leading to a plan of action to ban the procedure of morcellation and revising the 510K medical device approval process. YouTube Video: <http://youtu.be/Qvg5OXaiEiM>
- Dr. Stephen Tower, presenting on adverse events associated with Metal-on-Metal Hip Implants. HW USA Meeting. Apr. 2, 2014 YouTube Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw6iDg0A6Ys>
- Lisa McGiffert from Consumer Union on the Safety of Medical Devices Webcast/Radio. Oct. 22, 2013 Listen to Webcast of Radio Show (Jack Pattie) Presentation
- Joleen Chambers from FIDA on the Safety of Medical Devices Failed Implant Device Alliance. HW USA Conference. Nov. 1, 2013 <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2013/chambers/20131101-chambers.htm>

## #6. Health Care Reform.

### A. Malpractice

Health Watch USA has performed an extensive analysis of Medicare Billing Data which indicates that malpractice reform will not lower Medicare Expenditures. There were some indications that costs may actually increase. It may, thus, not have a significant impact on defensive medicine or the resultant decrease in accountability may encourage overutilization for increased economic compensation.

Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE, Saman DM. The Relationship Between Tort Reform and Medical Utilization. J Patient Saf. 2013 Oct 7. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 24104483

[http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/The\\_Relationship\\_Between\\_Tort\\_Reform\\_and\\_Medical.7.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/The_Relationship_Between_Tort_Reform_and_Medical.7.aspx)

One of the options which should be considered to help address malpractice is full disclosure. Below are several OpEds on this subject.

- Kavanagh KT. VA lesson: defend and deny bad health policy. Lexington Herald Leader. Jun. 22, 2014. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44494533.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Disclosure key to curbing medical errors. UK board should demand it. Lexington Herald Leader. Aug. 11, 2013. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44438388.html>
- Kavanagh TK. Hospitals, doctors must come clean when patients are harmed. Lexington Herald Leader. Online Mar. 5, 2017, Print Mar. 8, 2017. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article142832794.html>

### B. Healthcare System Governance

- Kavanagh KT. Health care integration: Will physicians lose their voice? Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons, June 2011. PMID: 22315908  
<https://www.facs.org/~media/files/publications/bulletin/2011/2011%20june%20bulletin.ashx>
- Kavanagh KT. The changing role of the physician. American College of Surgeons, Surgical News. Oct 23, 2012.  
<http://www.acssurgerynews.com/opinions/editorials/single-article/the-changing-role-of-the-physician/9dbaf6056dcb9a966c5beef8cb438de6.html>

## C. Systems of Payment

### 1. Single Payer Versus Competition

- Kavanagh KT. U.S. health reform now needs reforming. Lexington Herald Leader. Aug. 20, 2016. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article96764732.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Single-payer health care may emerge as best option. Lexington Herald Leader. May 16, 2015. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44599770.html>
- Kavanagh KT. Assessing changes in reform. August 27, 2012 Courier Journal. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/HW-USA-editorials.htm>
- Kavanagh KT. Revising Health Care Reform - Courier Journal, Louisville, Kentucky, Jan. 21, 2011. [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Courier-Journal/20101209-CJ-Health\\_Care\\_Storm\\_Brewing-HWUSA.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/Courier-Journal/20101209-CJ-Health_Care_Storm_Brewing-HWUSA.pdf)

### 2. The Discrepancy in Outpatient Services Payments to Hospital Based Versus Independent Physicians As a Driver of Physician Hospital Employment and Oligopoly Formation.

#### Op-Eds Regarding Outpatient Payment Discrepancies:

- Kavanagh KT. Two Takes: Should Hospitals Be Allowed to Charge Facility Fees? US News & World Report. Jan 11, 2013.  
Hospital Facility Fees Raise Out-of-Pocket Costs for Medicare Patients. US News & World Report. Jan 28, 2013.  
<http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2013/01/28/hospital-facility-fees-raise-out-of-pocket-costs-for-medicare-patients>
- Kavanagh KT. Costs soar when doctors work for hospitals. Lexington Herald Leader. Apr. 22, 2013. <http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44420115.html>
- Kavanagh KT, Bukulmez H. More doctors controlled by hospitals mean restricted care. Herald Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, March 1, 2012. .  
<http://www.kentucky.com/opinion/op-ed/article44157999.html>

## #7. Overutilization

Health Watch USA has had several initiatives to raise awareness of overutilization of healthcare (drugs, medical tests and surgery). These include OpEds, conference presentations and radio shows. In addition, one published peer reviewed paper analyzed tort reform and its effects on Medical Utilization. This paper casts doubt on the importance of defensive medicine as a driver of overutilization

Kavanagh KT, Calderon LE, Saman DM. The Relationship Between Tort Reform and Medical Utilization. J Patient Saf. 2013 Oct 7. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 24104483  
[http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/The\\_Relationship\\_Between\\_Tort\\_Reform\\_and\\_Medical.7.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2014/12000/The_Relationship_Between_Tort_Reform_and_Medical.7.aspx)

### Peer-Reviewed Articles Regarding Overutilization of Medical Care

- Kavanagh KT. How I Was Prescribed an Unnecessary Antibiotic While Traveling to a Conference on Antibiotic Resistance. JAMA Intern Med. 2014 Sep;174(9):1433-4. doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2014.3412.  
<http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1892183>

### Presentations Regarding Overutilization of Medical Care

- 2012, Nov. 9 - Conference Presentation: Rosemary Gibson. Overuse of Medical Care. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/6pRMII-vOGE>
- 2011, Nov. 11 - Overtreatment as an Urgent Patient Safety Priority. Health Watch USA Conference. Rosemary Gibson <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/conference2011/videos-gibson/20111111-rosemary-gibson-2.htm>

### OpEds Regarding Overutilization of Medical Care

- Kavanagh KT. Dr. Kevin Kavanagh: Overuse of antibiotics aids attacks of deadly bacteria. Lexington Herald Leader. May 9, 2014. <http://www.kentucky.com/2014/05/09/3234330/dr-kevin-kavanagh-overuse-of-antibiotics.html>
- Kavanagh KT, Saman DM. Patients dissatisfied with unnecessary, expensive care. Herald Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, June 25, 2012. <http://www.kentucky.com/2012/06/25/2236895/patients-dissatisfied-with-unnecessary.html>
- Saman DM, Kavanagh KT. Outpatient Antibiotic Utilization Highest in West Virginia and Kentucky. The Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy. Nov. 17, 2011. [http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/outpatient\\_antibiotic\\_utilization\\_highest\\_west\\_virginia\\_and\\_kentucky](http://www.cddep.org/blog/posts/outpatient_antibiotic_utilization_highest_west_virginia_and_kentucky)

### Radio Shows Regarding Overutilization

- 2014, Jun. 10 - Webcast/Radio: Peter Eisler, Medical Reporter from USA Today, Dan Smoot from Operation Unite and Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from HW USA discuss the epidemic of Drug Overdose in the Elderly. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/20140610-Peter->



[Eisler/20140610-Eisler-Kavanagh.htm](#)

- 2014, Mar. 11 - Webcast/Radio: Rosemary Gibson and Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA discuss medical overtreatment. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/20140311-Gibson-TreatmentTrap/20140311-Gibson-Kavanagh.htm>
- 2014, Feb. 11 - Webcast/Radio: Dr. John Santa from Consumer Union and Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA discuss the ABIM initiative of Choosing Wisely. <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/20140211-Santa-Choosing-Wisely/20140210-Santa-ABIM-Choosing-Wisely.htm>

## #8. Health Watch USA News Articles in National Media Outlets

Full Listing Can Be Found At: <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Publications/HWUSA-In-The-News.htm>

1. Nelson DJ, McNeill R. Money from infection-control industry muddies research into beating back superbugs Reuters News Service. Apr. 7, 2017. <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-superbugs-research/>
2. Rau J. How Medicare Penalizes Hospitals for Being Too Careful. New York Times. Apr. 20, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/21/health/how-medicare-penalizes-hospitals-for-being-too-careful.html>
3. Rau J. Medicare Penalizes 758 Hospitals For Safety Incidents. Kaiser Health News and NPR. Dec. 11, 2015. <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/12/10/459243853/medicare-penalizes-758-hospitals-for-safety-incidents>
4. O'Donnell J. and Ungar L. MRSA infections remain a back-to-school risk. USA Today.. Sep. 1, 2015. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/09/01/mrsa-superbug-back--school-risks-st-albans/71489354/>
5. Eisler P. Deadly infections from medical scopes go unreported, raising health risks. USA Today. Aug. 5, 2015. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/08/05/duodenoscope-infections-not-reported/29988165/>
6. Gozner M. Safety journal blasts Denham in conflict of interest scandal. Modern Healthcare. Nov. 26, 2014. <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20141126/BLOG/311269996>
7. Clark C. Former NQF Co-Chair Linked to Conflicts of Interest in Journal Probe. Health Leaders. Nov. 21, 2014. <http://www.healthleadersmedia.com/page-1/LED-310580/Former-NQF-CoChair-Linked-to-Conflicts-of-Interest-in-Journal-Probe>
8. Ungar L. Nurses face obstacles on front lines against Ebola. USA Today. Oct. 23, 2014. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/10/23/nurses-face-ebola-challenges/17661387/>
9. Rau J. Hospitals Struggle To Beat Back Serious Infections NPR. Oct. 21, 2014. [www.npr.org/blogs/health/2014/10/21/357618079/hospitals-struggle-to-beat-back-serious-infections](http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2014/10/21/357618079/hospitals-struggle-to-beat-back-serious-infections)
10. Ungar, L. 'Nightmare bacteria' spread in Southeast. USA Today. July 31, 2014. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/07/31/cre-nightmare-bacteria-spread/13322879/>
11. Rau, J. Hospitals Boost Patient Safety, But More Work Is Needed Kaiser Health News. May 7, 2014. <http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Stories/2014/May/07/Hospitals-Boost-Patient-Safety->

[But-Still-Have-A-Way-To-Go.aspx](#)

12. Veterans hospital finds ways to tame MRSA super bug. USA Today. Feb 3, 2014.  
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/02/03/mrsa-infection-screening-veterans-affairs/5183403/>
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