



# Health Watch USA - Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) March 2009

**Call for papers:** The Conference for Healthcare Transparency and Patient Advocacy is issuing a call for papers for the Nov. 13, 2009 conference. Four 25 minute presentations will be selected from submitted abstracts. Presentations should describe or research an idea or example of how to change our healthcare system and/or how to better advocate for patients. Submissions should be on two pages. The first is an Author Contact Page with the name, e-mail, address and institution of the author. The second is the Abstract Page and should contain a 300 word abstract and a statement regarding any funding or conflicts of interest with the presentation. If no conflicts exist, this needs to be clearly stated.

All submissions will be blindly reviewed by a committee of three active and retired academicians. All accepted presentations will be expected to submit a narrative with references to the Journal of Health and Social Policy. (Conference is scheduled to be held on Nov. 13, 2009 at the Four Points Sheraton in Lexington, Kentucky.) Please send submissions in MS Word format to [kavanagh.ent@gmail.com](mailto:kavanagh.ent@gmail.com)

**Exhibitors:** Health Watch USA is now taking reservations for 501C3 organizations to exhibit at our Nov. 13, 2009 Conference. We have eight confirmed exhibitors and four spaces left.

Go to <http://www.healthconference.org/exhibits.htm>

Please send submissions in MS Word format to [kavanagh.ent@gmail.com](mailto:kavanagh.ent@gmail.com)

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**Hospital Acquired Infections:** Although legislation to prevent hospital acquired infections has stalled and has gotten little traction in the State of Kentucky, Senator Menendez is planning to reintroduce his bill on "MRSA Infection Prevention and Patient Protection Act." This Act requires MRSA screening on entering the ICU and other high-risk hospital departments. In addition, it requires reporting of all cases of MRSA and other resistant organisms. <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s110-2525>

American College of Surgeons tells of one hospital's experience to perform MRSA screening to decrease surgical infections. <http://www.facs.org/surgerynews/0209.pdf>

AARP – Bulletin Article on Hospital Acquired Infections – "Battling Superbugs"  
[http://bulletin.aarp.org/yourhealth/caregiving/articles/battling\\_superbugs.html](http://bulletin.aarp.org/yourhealth/caregiving/articles/battling_superbugs.html)

Seattle Times editorial discusses, "Ending a culture of resistance to MRSA screening".  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/editorialsopinion/2008773750\\_editb23mrsa.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/editorialsopinion/2008773750_editb23mrsa.html)

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**Non-Payment for Never Events:** Never events are again getting attention in the President's proposed budget. Nonpayment to hospitals may in the future include global days and nonpayment may also apply

to readmissions. See the report to Congress (Chapter 5): Promoting Greater Efficiency in Medicine.  
[http://www.medpac.gov/documents/Jun07\\_EntireReport.pdf](http://www.medpac.gov/documents/Jun07_EntireReport.pdf)

In addition, there appears to be significant support in Washington regarding nonpayment of Never Events for Medicaid.

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**Health Care Reform:** The White House has just launched a new website [www.healthreform.gov](http://www.healthreform.gov)

The website presents the top concerns of the health care community discussions participants.  
55% are concerned with costs vs. 12% with quality

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### **Coronary Artery Stenting - New Indications:**

Indications for placement of cardiac stents are continuing to contract. The following findings from recent research studies published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

- 1) The placement of coronary artery stents as an initial management of stable coronary artery disease did not reduce the incidence of death or heart attack when added to medical therapy.  
<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/short/356/15/1503>
  - 2) A recent article in the March 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the NEJM found that Coronary-Artery Bypass Grafting was more effective than percutaneous coronary intervention with drug-eluting stents for the treatment of severe coronary artery disease.  
<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/reprint/360/10/961.pdf>
  - 3) Authors Mark, et al., found in the treatment of late myocardial infarcts (heart attacks), no difference between medical therapy and percutaneous coronary artery intervention (stents).  
<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/abstract/360/8/774>
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**Ear Stapling:** The Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure reported in its Winter 2009 Newsletter that it considers ear stapling a medical procedure and can only be performed by a physician. It also stated that because it is being performed for weight loss, smoking cessation, insomnia and other conditions that they consider it a practice of medicine. In addition, the Board cautions that they are not aware of any evidence that ear stapling is effective for any of these conditions.

<http://kbml.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/103F2BAA-C4A8-407B-A22E-245051CB41DD/0/Winter2009.pdf>

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