



# Health Watch USA Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012

Member of the National Quality Forum and a designated "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

## **HW USA Op-Ed on Healthcare Integration, Medicare Solvency, and the Role of the Physician in Healthcare.**

Hospital Cover charges are driving physician employment by hospitals and physicians are at risk of losing their voice in healthcare policy and quality assurance.

<http://www.kentucky.com/2012/03/01/2089879/ky-voices-more-doctors-controlled.html>

References for the Op-Ed on Physician Integration can be viewed here:

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-References/editorial/20120301-doctors-employed-by-hospitals.htm>

### **Related Reports:**

The effects of loss of the independent medical staff and the doctor patient relationship was published in the AMA News on Jan 23, 2012:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2012/01/23/prsa0123.htm>

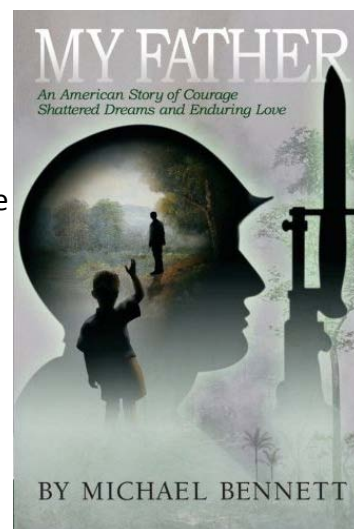
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## **My Father: An American Story of Courage, Shattered Dreams and Enduring Love**

Michael Bennett, a well-known patient advocate, has published an account of the life of his father, ending with death from a healthcare acquired MRSA infection. What sets this work apart are the moving final chapters which outlines a perspective into the political aspects of medical policy making which take place in the highest levels of our government.

Hear a presentation by Michael Bennet at a recent HW USA meeting.

<http://www.healthwatchusa.org/HWUSA-Presentations-Meeting/HWUSA-Meeting.htm>



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## **CMS Announces a Delay in Implementation of ICD-10 Billing**

This has several ramifications. One is that the software to allow for ICD-10 reporting complies with Version 5010 transaction standards. It is this software version which will allow CMS to capture 25 submitted diagnostic codes. With older billing systems, CMS can only capture the first 9 of 25 submitted diagnostic codes.(1) This may affect the accuracy of Hospital Acquired Condition reporting.

<https://www.cms.gov/ICD10/Downloads/HHSPressReleaseICD10final321612.pdf>

(1) Reference [http://www.healthwatchusa.org/publications/2012-Documents/20100504-CMS-ICD-9\\_Capture-23914.pdf](http://www.healthwatchusa.org/publications/2012-Documents/20100504-CMS-ICD-9_Capture-23914.pdf)

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## **Experts Question Medicare's Efforts to Rate Hospitals**

*The following is why HW USA considers State Initiatives to verify and supplement the Federal Reporting Effort so Important.*

Read Story in Kaiser Health News.

<http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Stories/2012/February/13/medicare-hospital-patient-safety-records.aspx>

Data verification by States is needed as several states (Colorado and Pennsylvania) already have significant problems with underreporting of data -- see HW USA Jan 30, 2012 Newsletter <http://www.healthwatchusa.org/publications/20120130-Jan-HWUSA-%20Newsletter-2.pdf>

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## **CMS only Requires Infection Rates for Abdominal Hysterectomies and Colon Surgery to be Reported.**

Infection rates for C-Sections should also be reported since this is the most common surgery performed at hospitals and the measurement technique should be similar to Abdominal Hysterectomies.

C-Sections are also an over utilized operation with significant variation in rates.

Rising rates in the United States over the last three decades  
<http://www.cesareanrates.com/us-cesarean-rate-1970-2010/>

In Kentucky reported C-Section rates vary widely from 20% to over 70%  
<http://www.cesareanrates.com/kentucky-cesarean-rates/>

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## **Hospital Acquired Infections Strikes a Prominent Reporter After Routine Back Surgery**

<http://www.healthleadersmedia.com/page-1/QUA-276655/When-a-Surgical-Site-Infection-Sends-a-Friend-Through-Hell>

<http://www2.dailyprogress.com/news/2012/feb/11/couple-trying-change-law-who-should-pay-hospital-a-ar-1682222/>

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## **New AHRQ Report Shows There is Still a Punitive Safety Culture**

*"Nonpunitive Response to Error (average 44 percent positive response)—the extent to which staff feel that their mistakes and event reports are not held against them and that mistakes are not kept in their personnel file."*

<http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/hospsurvey12/hosp12summ.htm>

The majority (54%) of hospital staff state that they feel they are being written up, instead of focusing on the problem. Dr. James Battles stated that this is a major problem. "... we still have this residue of a pretty punitive culture."

<http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2012/02/20/prl20220.htm>

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## **Organized Network With Industry Ties Fueling Painkiller Boom**

"... the UW group (University of Wisconsin-based organization) is just one link in a network of national organizations and researchers with financial connections to the makers of narcotic painkillers that paved the way for the boom in prescribing drugs such as OxyContin and Vicodin."

<http://www.jsonline.com/watchdog/watchdogreports/painkiller-boom-fueled-by-networking-dp3p2rn-139609053.html>

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## **Surgical Instruments Not Being Cleaned Properly**

"Filthy, dangerous medical implements (instruments) have been showing up in hospitals and outpatient surgery centers with alarming regularity."

<http://www.iwatchnews.org/2012/02/22/8207/filthy-surgical-instruments-hidden-threat-americas-operating-rooms>

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## **More Problems for Gastric Banding**

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/758003>

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