



Health Watch USAsm Newsletter

www.healthwatchusa.org June 22, 2014

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

Psychoactive Drug Abuse and Overuse in the Elderly.



Peter Eisler, Medical Reporter USA Today, Dr. Kevin Kavanagh from Health Watch USA & Dan Smoot, CEO of Operation Unite, Discuss Prescription Drug Overuse and Abuse in the Elderly. Abuse of psychoactive drugs has reached epidemic proportions with one in four individuals over the age of 55 taking these medications.

32 Min. Radio/Webinar Presentation (View on YouTube) June 10, 2014: <http://youtu.be/ATAgizAalGc>

Peter Eisler: "Older Americans hooked on Rx: 'I was a zombie' Seniors and prescription drugs: as misuse rises, so does the toll"
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/05/20/seniors-addiction-prescription-drugs-painkillers/9277489/>

Peter Eisler: "Seniors' use of potent meds via Medicare staggering" <http://usat.ly/1pCR1Rv>

Healthcare Associated Infections

MRSA prevention guidelines published in ICHE.

Health Watch USA is pleased that surveillance is listed as an effective intervention and one that is needed if other measures are not effective in controlling MRSA infections. Similar to the recommendations made in our publication on MRSA, "The use of surveillance and preventative measures for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus infections in surgical patients", the quality of evidence for this recommendation was graded as II. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/676534>

New Study Finds that MRSA Colonized Patients Contaminate the Environment More Than MRSA Infected Patients

Abstract: "A total of 1,023 environmental surfaces were sampled from 45 rooms with patients infected or colonized with methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) or vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE) before terminal room cleaning. Colonized patients had higher median total target colony-forming units (CFU) of MRSA or VRE than did infected patients (median, 25 CFU [interquartile range, 0-106 CFU] vs 0 CFU [interquartile range, 0-29 CFU]; P = .033."
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24915217>

Antibiotic-resistant 'nightmare germs' found across Florida

"Germs resistant to virtually all antibiotics have infected patients in hospitals across Florida for at least six years, yet state (Florida) officials allowed hospitals to handle the outbreaks discreetly without alerting the public, a Palm Beach Post investigation has found."

<http://www.mypalmbeachpost.com/news/news/nightmare-germs-found-across-florida/ngF7K/#3d6544c7.3782703.735397>

Century old Virus Therapy for Infections (Phage Therapy) Making a Comeback:

"For decades, patients behind the Iron Curtain were denied access to some of the best antibiotics developed in the West. To make do, the Soviet Union invested heavily in the use of bacteriophages — viruses that kill bacteria — to treat infections. "

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/antibiotic-resistance-revitalizes-century-old-virus-therapy/>

Patient Safety

Access Problems and Transparency at Veterans Administration Hospitals - HW USA OpEd

Lexington Herald Leader: "The United States needs to approach what has happened in the VA not as an indictment of any one type of system, but as a critical learning opportunity on the importance of transparency and how the culture of our health care system desperately needs to change."

<http://www.kentucky.com/2014/06/22/3303666/va-lesson-defend-and-deny-bad.html?sp=/99/349/589/>



Safety Problems at the Cleveland Clinic

Modern Healthcare reported Cleveland Clinic cases and CMS Survey reports which highlight flaws in safety oversight. During this time the Cleveland Clinic was given a top Rating by US News and World Report. <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20140607/MAGAZINE/306079939> View CMS [View CMS Letter To Cleveland Clinic](#)

- "Last year, the Cleveland Clinic was cited for 23 health and safety issues. Plus, it received two letters warning that reimbursements for Medicare patients would be stopped if corrective action wasn't taken within days"
<http://www.ideastream.org/news/feature/cleveland-clinic-cited-for-federal-violations>
- "The publication's (Modern Healthcare) three-month analysis of hundreds of pages of federal inspection reports reveals the 1,268-bed hospital spent 19 months on "termination track" with Medicare between 2010 and 2013 as a result of more than a dozen inspections and follow-up visits triggered by patient complaints. "
<http://www.crainscleveland.com/article/20140610/BLOGS07/140619973/safety-issues-raised-at-cleveland-clinic>
- Within hours after the story in Modern Healthcare was published, the Cleveland Clinic CEO took his name out of consideration for Secretary of Veterans Affairs. <http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20140607/INFO/306079886>

One interesting observation is that the Cleveland Clinic scored very high in the nation on the US News & World Report. This ranking system is heavily weighted by reputation (32.5%) and only 5% on patient safety. <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/best-hospitals/articles/2013/07/16/how-we-ranked-the-best-hospitals-2013-14-an-faq?page=3>

Patient-safety advocates issue call for increased regulation.

"Nearly a half century after Medicare's founding and 15 years after the Institute of Medicine's landmark report "To Err Is Human" ignited concerns about patient safety, the nation still doesn't have an effective set of regulations to protect people once they have entered the healthcare delivery system."

<http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20140614/MAGAZINE/306149779/1246>

Sham Peer Review Issue Goes Mainstream. WaPo: VA Physicians Fear Sham Peer Review

<http://hcrenewal.blogspot.com/2014/06/sham-peer-review-issue-goes-mainstram.html>

Healthcare Reform

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, 2014 Update: How the U.S. Health Care System Compares Internationally

"The United States health care system is the most expensive in the world, but this report and prior editions consistently show the U.S. underperforms relative to other countries on most dimensions of performance. Among the 11 nations studied in this report—Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States—the U.S. ranks last, as it did in the 2010, 2007, 2006, and 2004 editions of Mirror, Mirror. Most troubling, the U.S. fails to achieve better health outcomes than the other countries, and as shown in the earlier editions, the U.S. is last or near last on dimensions of access, efficiency, and equity. "

<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2014/jun/mirror-mirror>

Massachusetts Nurses Push for Financial Disclosure of Hospitals

"An activist nurses' union is pushing for legislation in Massachusetts that would create greater transparency regarding hospital prices, executive compensation and investment of assets."

<http://www.fiercehealthfinance.com/story/ma-nurses-union-pushes-pay-curbs-financial-disclosures-hospitals/2014-06-12>

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Upcoming Events:

June 25, 2014: Dr. Hooman Noorchashm, & Dr. Amy Reed on the dangers of morcellation and laparoscopic hysterectomy.

Dr. Noorchashm's wife, Amy Reed, is a 40-year-old mother of six who is an anesthesiologist at Beth Israel. After suffering from pelvic pain for months, Dr. Reed in October sought treatment at Brigham and Women's Hospital, the same facility where her husband works. The diagnosis was fibroids—which are almost always benign growths—and she had a routine hysterectomy that included morcellation to avoid a large incision. USA Today Story:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2014/02/18/hysterectomy-laparoscopic-morcellation-amy-reed/5347093/>

If you wish to attend this event, please send an email to healthwatchusa@gmail.com





July 8, 2014: Leah Binder, CEO of The Leapfrog Group, will be on the Jack Pattie Show to discuss value based purchasing and their hospital ranking system.

http://www.leapfroggroup.org/media/file/LeahBIO_Jan2010.pdf The show may be listened to live by going to <http://www.wvlkam.com/> and clicking on the red "LISTEN LIVE" button in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Aug 20, 2014: Alicia Budd (CMS/CCSA) will discuss the new regulations on value purchasing and HACs for the 2014 IPPS. In other words, what are the current financial incentives that Medicare is using to promote quality in our hospitals.

Nov. 7, 2014: Health Watch USA's Annual Health Policy Conference, Lexington, KY. Continuing Education Credits for physicians, nurses, social workers and physical therapists will be offered. For more information go to: www.healthconference.org Registration is now open.

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