



# Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>

## Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) Mar. 1, 2017

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

### Healthcare Quality

#### Is the Rude Surgeon a Risk to Patient Safety??



Dr. Gerald Hickson presented at the March 2017 HW USA Meeting on the dangers of disruptive behavior in the Operating Room. YouTube Video of Presentation: <https://youtu.be/c0UqKxO2-Qg>

**Washington Top News:** "Surgeons rude to patients may pose problem in OR, study says. Complications were most common in patients whose surgeons had received lots of earlier complaints about their behavior, researchers found. The complaints were typically unsolicited phone calls to hospitals from unhappy patients or their relatives." <http://wtop.com/health/2017/02/surgeons-rude-to-patients-may-pose-problem-in-or-study-says/>

[patients-may-pose-problem-in-or-study-says/](http://wtop.com/health/2017/02/surgeons-rude-to-patients-may-pose-problem-in-or-study-says/)

#### Should hospitals — and doctors — apologize for medical mistakes?

Washington Post: Steve Kraman, MD (Lexington, KY and member of HW USA Board of Directors): "If we had said nothing, [the family] never would have known a thing," said Kraman, who was also the hospital's risk manager. "We never would have gotten sued. But I just didn't feel that was right." So he suggested to the hospital's lawyer that they come clean to the patient's two adult daughters, from whom she was estranged.

"I sat down and told them exactly what happened, that we were responsible for it, that they should hire a lawyer and we were going to negotiate a payment," he recalled. Two months later, the family was paid \$250,000.

Washington Post: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/should-hospitals--and-doctors--apologize-for-medical-mistakes/2017/03/10/1cad035a-fd20-11e6-8f41-000119080000\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.2cb5ee948ff5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/should-hospitals--and-doctors--apologize-for-medical-mistakes/2017/03/10/1cad035a-fd20-11e6-8f41-000119080000_story.html?utm_term=.2cb5ee948ff5)

#### Flying Blind: Should we treat medical errors like plane crashes?

Voluntary and Non-Audited Reporting – Voluntary and non-audited reporting mechanisms greatly under-report adverse events, preventable harm and fatalities. "The 2010 Office of Inspector General

Report found diagnostic codes ‘absent or inaccurate’ in seven of eleven Medicare hospital-acquired conditions, and in 93 percent of the time, incident reports were not submitted.” In fact, “since 2005, an average of less than 1000 sentinel events have been voluntarily reported to The Joint Commission per year from the hospitals that have undergone their accreditation process...Officials at The Joint Commission estimate that less than 0.1% of events have been reported.”

<https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/2017/03/13/flying-blind-should-we-treat-medical-errors-plane-crashes>

### **Another Estimation on Hospital-Related Deaths Due to Medical Errors**

Culture of Safety – Having a ‘culture of safety’ serves as the hospital’s foundation from which to build new internal systems and policies that prevent patients from being harmed. “What ties the occurrence of preventable adverse events and mortality together is the willingness and determination of facilities to adopt a culture of safety and invest in patient safety. The adoption of preventive protocols is further hindered by the United States’ fragmented, nonuniform healthcare systems composed of facilities with differing philosophies and administrative structure.”

<https://hhri.net/another-estimation-on-hospital-related-deaths-due-to-medical-errors/>

### **Congress Moves To Punish Anyone Using The ACA And Medicare**

Huffington Post: "Among H.R. 1215’s many harsh provisions is a federal mandate on the value of a life. This appears in the form of an across-the-board \$250,000 “cap” on compensation for “non-economic” injuries (like paralysis, trauma, reproductive harm), which would be mandated in states even where such caps are unconstitutional. That same cap would apply whether a parent lost a child, a senior citizen were harmed in a nursing home, or a family breadwinner were permanently disabled due to reckless medical care."

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/congress-moves-to-punish-everyone-using-the-affordable-us-58b34240e4b0e5fdf6197405?>

### **When Evidence Says No, But Doctors Say Yes**

Epstein, David: "Years after research contradicts common practices, patients continue to demand them and doctors continue to deliver. The result is an epidemic of unnecessary and unhelpful treatment."

Propublica: <https://www.propublica.org/article/when-evidence-says-no-but-doctors-say-yes>

### **Public Contact With Physicians Who Receive Industry Payments.**

Pham-Kanter, G, et al., Journal of General Internal Medicine: "Across the six most frequently visited specialties, patient contact with physicians who had received an industry payment ranged from 60% to 85%." “Patients’ contact with physicians who receive industry payments is more prevalent than physician-based measures of industry contact would suggest. Very few Americans know whether their own doctor has received industry payments or are aware that payment information is publicly available."

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11606-017-4012-3>

## Health Care Infections

### **Eight years of decreased MRSA healthcare-associated infections associated with Veterans Affairs Prevention Initiative**

"The new study, by Martin E. Evans, MD and colleagues from the Veterans Health Administration, found that between October 2007 and September 2015 monthly HAI rates dropped 87 percent in intensive care units (ICUs), 80.1 percent in non-ICUs, and 80.9 percent in spinal cord injury units (SCIUs). In long-term care facilities (LTCFs), rates fell 49.4 percent during the period of July 2009 to September 2015. During September 2015, only two MRSA HAIs were reported in ICUs, 20 in non-ICUs (with three in SCIUs), and 31 in LTCFs nationwide."

AJIC: [http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553\(16\)30814-8/fulltext](http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553(16)30814-8/fulltext)

**But in the United States the MRSA Epidemic Appears to be Worsening. View two recent testimonies on this subject:**

- Kentucky House Health and Welfare Committee - Dec. 14, 2016.  
YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/U9GQDudm8w8> [Download Slides](#)
- Presidential Advisory Committee on Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria - Jan 25, 2017.  
YouTube Video: [https://youtu.be/hbdXX3a\\_OIY](https://youtu.be/hbdXX3a_OIY)
- Heath Watch USA 2016 Conference - Nov 4, 2016.  
YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/G13bFSY9sBQ> [Download Slides](#)

### **Deadly, Drug-Resistant 'Superbugs' Pose Huge Threat, W.H.O. Says.**

"The rate at which new strains of drug-resistant bacteria have emerged in recent years, prompted by overuse of antibiotics in humans and livestock, terrifies public health experts. Many consider the new strains just as dangerous as emerging viruses like Zika or Ebola."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/27/health/who-bacteria-pathogens-antibiotic-resistant-superbugs.html>

**These 12 superbugs pose the greatest threat to human health, WHO says: WAPA:**

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/02/27/these-12-superbugs-pose-the-greatest-threat-to-human-health-who-says/>

### **High Risk Patients with MRSA Colonization are at a Greater Risk for Infections**

AJIC, Dec. 2016 : Cadena, et al., "Among patients with MRSA colonization, surgery or dialysis during follow-up and history of hemiplegia were associated with subsequent MRSA infection. Knowledge of these risk factors may allow for future targeted interventions to prevent MRSA infections among colonized patients.."

View Article (Abstract): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27372225>

**FDA Drug Safety Communication: FDA warns about rare but serious allergic**

## **reactions with the skin antiseptic chlorhexidine gluconate**

"The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning that rare but serious allergic reactions have been reported with the widely used skin antiseptic products containing chlorhexidine gluconate. Although rare, the number of reports of serious allergic reactions to these products has increased over the last several years. As a result, we are requesting the manufacturers of over-the-counter (OTC) antiseptic products containing chlorhexidine gluconate to add a warning about this risk to the Drug Facts labels. Prescription chlorhexidine gluconate mouthwashes and oral chips used for gum disease already contain a warning about the possibility of serious allergic reactions in their labels."

FDA: <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/ucm530975.htm>

## **Preoperative Chlorhexidine Gluconate Use Can Increase Risk for Surgical Site Infections after Ventral Hernia Repair**

"Prehospital chlorhexidine gluconate scrub appears to increase the risk of 30-day wound morbidity in patients undergoing ventral hernia repair. These findings suggest that the generalized use of prehospital chlorhexidine might not be desirable for all surgical populations."

<http://www.journalacs.org/article/S1072-7515%2816%2931704-5/fulltext>

## **Cost-effectiveness analysis of universal screening for carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae in hospital inpatients.**

"At prevalence levels above 0.3%, screening was cost-saving compared to not screening. Screening inpatients for CPE carriage is likely cost-effective, and may be cost-saving, depending on the local prevalence of carriage."

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28078557>

## **Need to save some money? Then universal admission screening for CPE is for you!**

<https://reflectionsipc.com/2017/03/16/need-to-save-some-money-then-universal-admission-screening-for-cpe-is-for-you/>

## **Researcher helps stem the spread of superbugs**

Common household antiseptic products found in soaps and detergents can cause resistance to antibiotics such as tetracycline. "... anti-bacterial soaps containing triclosan are bad for the environment, harmful for health, and do nothing to prevent disease."

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-02-stem-superbugs.html>

## **Are hospital floors an underappreciated reservoir for transmission of health care-associated pathogens?**

AJIC: Deshpande A., et al.: "We found that floors in patient rooms were frequently contaminated with health care-associated pathogens and demonstrated the potential for indirect transfer of pathogens to hands from fomites placed on the floor. Further studies are needed to investigate the potential for contaminated hospital floors to contribute to pathogen transmission."

[http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553\(16\)31014-8/fulltext](http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553(16)31014-8/fulltext)

## **State (California) to step up inspections at hospitals with high infection rates**

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-infections-report-20170301-story.html>

## Medical Ethics

### Reviews Of Medical Studies May Be Tainted By Funders' Influence

When doctors want to help untangle confusing and sometimes contradictory findings in the scientific literature, they often turn to specially crafted summary studies. These are considered the gold standard for evidence. But one of the leading advocates for this practice is now raising alarm about them, because they are increasingly being tainted by commercial interests.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/10/12/497550681/reviews-of-medical-studies-may-be-tainted-by-funders-influence>

### Years of Ethics Charges, but Star Cancer Researcher Gets a Pass

NYT: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/08/science/cancer-carlo-croce.html>

### Family-reported errors may go undocumented on hospital records

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-hospitals-errors-idUSKBN16629K>

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## Health Watch USA's Apr. 19th Meeting

1:00 PM ET -- Adobe Connect



Presentation by Dr. Neel Shah, MD, MPP  
Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School and Director of the Delivery Decisions Initiative at the Ariadne Labs for Health Systems Innovation, who will discuss the wide variation in hysterectomy rates across the United States. (Time 1:00 PM on April 19, 2017)  
To Join the meeting, send an email to [healthwatchusa@gmail.com](mailto:healthwatchusa@gmail.com)

## Health Watch USA's 2016 Healthcare Quality & Patient Safety Conference

### Ideas for patient safety: collaboration, transparency, more nurses in hospitals and nursing homes, surgical patients' risk awareness.

Kentucky Health News. Nov. 20, 2016: "Patient safety was the topic at the 2016 Health Watch USA conference this month in Lexington, with health advocates calling for a more collaborative and transparent health-care system to better prevent medical errors, improved nurse-to-patient ratios and a call for patients to become their own advocates to improve their safety in the operating room." <http://kyhealthnews.blogspot.com/2016/11/ideas-to-improve-patient-safety.html>

### Presentation videos for the 2016 Conference are now online.

To view the conference presentations: Go To:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKKV6p\\_etRmPhxndxrvt7yeE-ICUmqzK](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKKV6p_etRmPhxndxrvt7yeE-ICUmqzK)

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