The Patient Safety Story: Lessons from two reporters in the trenches

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Objectives

- The participant will be able to communicate the way poor quality of care in areas such as maternal health, medical mistakes and infection control can affect patients and their families.
- The participant will be able to utilize storytelling and work with media to bring awareness to patient safety issues and spur policymakers to address problems.

Maternal health and safety

- The United States has the highest maternal death rate in the developed world.
- > A USA TODAY investigation found:

Hospitals know how to protect mothers. They just aren't doing it. About half of maternal deaths and injuries could be prevented or reduced with better medical care. For years, experts have recommended that doctors, nurses and hospitals follow safety practices known to save lives. But <u>USA TODAY found</u> that, at some hospitals, less than 15% of women experiencing childbirth emergencies quickly received recommended treatments.

Maternal health (con't)

* Many states fail to track and study moms' deaths. USA TODAY further revealed that state maternal death review committees across the country often avoid scrutinizing medical care occurring in the days and hours before mothers' deaths - instead focusing on women's lifestyle choices or larger societal problems, like obesity, smoking and seatbelt use. Some states didn't study mothers' deaths at all.

National attention for a lingering problem





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DEADLY DELIVERIES A USA TODAY INVESTIGATION

What states aren't doing to save new moms' lives

Many reviews haven't even scrutinized medical care provided

ere going to try to stop mothers from dying in childbirth, you might try what most states in America have done: assign a panel of experts to review what's going wrong and offer ideas to fix it. I But that hasn't worked. I Death ig pregnant women and new mothers have gotten worse, even as here improved. Today, the U.S. is the most dangerous eloped world to deliver a baby. I Turns out, well-meaning states place in the des oss the country have been doing it wrong. I At least 30 states have avoided edical care provided to mothers who died or they haven't been ing deaths at all, a USA TODAY investigation has found. I Instead, many es emphasized lifestyle choices and societal ills in their reports on maternal deaths. They weighed in on women smoking too much or getting too fat or on their failure to seek prenatal medical care. See MOTHERS, Pag



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Jorge L. Ortiz

ters whether to sign a landmark bill that would make the state the first in the nation to sequire more women it

Stories spur action

Senate passes a 'landmark' bill that aims to reduce maternal deaths

LAURA UNGAR | LOUISVILLE COURIER JOURNAL | 6:29 am EST December 14, 2018





"I am one of the 50,000"

Videos can help tell the story of patient harm in a very powerful way.

https://www.usatoday.com/deadlydeliveries/videos/

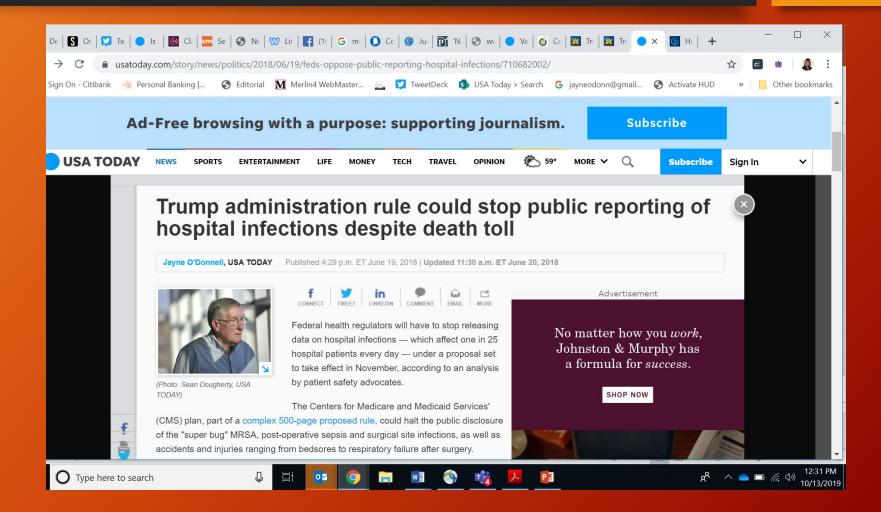
Ways to connect with the media

- Look for reporters who are already writing about an issue you care about.
- Contact information for the reporter is usually included beneath a story. Reach out.
- Reach out to reporters through social media, particularly through Twitter.
- Help reporters find and tell the stories of real people affected by the patient safety issue. The most impactful stories, by far, are those that include patients willing to share their experiences publically.

(More) ways to connect with media

- Be a source on other stories to develop relationship with reporter. (Get good at 'sound bites')
- Alert reporters to new developments, such as regulations or transparency issues.
- Be ready to tell your story concisely, on short notice.
- Don't call. Email is almost always best. Send occasional follow up email the next day.
- Direct pitches directly to individuals, not mass emails.

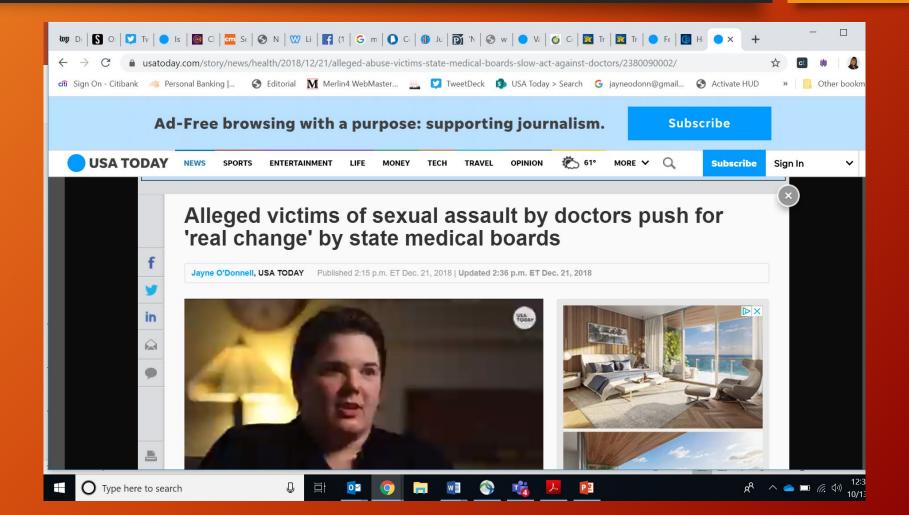
One Patient's Story Can Be Example Of Many



One Patient's Story Can Be Example Of Many

- Think of all the problems your case illustrates as that increases potential for exposure
- Hand washing, hospital ratings, infections, disruptive doctors, confidential settlements and so on.
- New developments represent new chance to weigh in about it

Developing a Reporter Relationship



Developing a Reporter Relationship

Few reporters can follow developments like victims can

- Even shrinking newsrooms means your tips more important than ever
- Be a rolodex for reporters looking for other sources.

Let's talk about your stories

And how to get them into our stories and others'...