

ECRI's *Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care* newsletter is being offered to CAPIC insureds at no cost. If you are interested in visiting any of the links in this edition, please contact Brad Dunkin, Assistant Vice President, at BDunkin@CAPphysicians.com.

Patient Safety

Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care



Learn More about Your Membership

Attend a live demo **December 21, 2023, 1:00 PM EST**, or **contact us** to schedule an individualized demo for your team.

October 24, 2023

Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care is a biweekly service provided by ECRI. We welcome your comments; please send them to [**AmbulatoryCareRM@ecri.org**](mailto:AmbulatoryCareRM@ecri.org).

What's New?

- Addressing Medical and Recreational Marijuana **view**
- ECRI Now: A Systematic Approach to Workplace Violence Prevention **watch, listen and subscribe now**

Spotlight on Violence against Healthcare Staff

Patient violence and aggression is pervasive in healthcare settings and puts patients, staff, and the healthcare organization at risk. ECRI named **[Physical and Verbal Violence against Healthcare Staff](#)** among the top 10 patient safety concerns in 2023. Use ECRI's resources to ensure your organization is taking comprehensive and adequate action against workplace violence.



- [Violence in Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Workplace Violence](#)
- [Self-Assessment: Violence Prevention in the Healthcare Workplace](#)
- [Self-Assessment: Workplace Violence](#)
- [Ask ECRI: Patient Violence: Zero Tolerance and Patients with Underlying Conditions](#)
- [Violence in Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Podcast: Patient Violence](#)

Patient Safety & Relations

Tuberculosis Cases Rise in New York City, Health Officials Fear Possible Resurgence

What's the news. New York City has confirmed about 500 cases of active tuberculosis so far this year—an increase of approximately 20% from the same time last year; although actively infectious patients should be evaluated quickly to minimize the public health threat, the average wait time for an appointment at one of the city's three remaining tuberculosis clinics is two to three days, according to an **[October 4, 2023, Politico article](#)**.

Why it matters. Tuberculosis can be deadly if not treated. The rising cases and increased wait times for treatment foreshadow a possible resurgence of the disease.

How ECRI can help. The **[Resource Collection: Infection Control](#)** offers guidance, self-assessments, and trainings on infection prevention and control.

Pediatric Telehealth Mental Health Services Increased over 3,000% during Early COVID-19 Pandemic

What's the news. In-person pediatric mental health services decreased by 42% during the COVID-19 pandemic's acute phase (from mid-March to mid-December 2020, before vaccine availability) compared with prepandemic levels, while pediatric telehealth services increased 30-fold (3,027%) in the same time period, according to a **[research letter published October 3, 2023](#)**, in *JAMA Network Open*. From

January 2019 to August 2022, mental health service utilization increased by 21.7%, according to researchers.

Why it matters. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dire effect on pediatric mental health, with pediatric patients experiencing extreme anxiety and depression, which has led to increased suicide attempts.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named [The Pediatric Mental Health Crisis](#) the number one patient safety concern in 2023.

Worker & Environmental Safety

Burnout Rates among Physicians

What's the news. Significantly higher burnout rates were found among female physicians compared with male physicians, primary care physicians compared with physicians in other specialties, and physicians with 10 years of experience or less compared with those with more experience, according to a [study published October 6, 2023, in JAMA Network Open](#).

Why it matters. Increasing burnout rates create a potential threat to the ability of the U.S. healthcare system to care for patients, according to the study.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article [Supporting Resilience in Healthcare Workers](#) discusses how organizations can promote resilience among staff and prevent burnout.

Legal & Regulatory

Convicted Felon Once Again Falsely Finds Employment in Pennsylvania Health System

What's the news. A convicted felon who had previously obtained healthcare executive positions around the United States once again briefly found employment at a Pennsylvania healthcare system by claiming a false employment history, according to an [article published September 21, 2023, in MedPage Today](#). The individual was hired in mid-July as the senior director of facilities at a hospital after claiming he had worked for a California hospital for the past eight years, despite that for five of those years he was an inmate in a Louisiana prison after being convicted of defrauding a cancer center and a health insurance cooperative.

Why it matters. For every job applicant and employee, healthcare organizations must recruit, hire, and fire with great care. Despite pressure to recruit personnel and fill positions rapidly, employers must proceed cautiously when hiring to ensure that

the organization is staffed by individuals who possess the training and skills necessary.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article [Human Resources](#) discusses employment laws, how to conduct the hiring process, and the importance of background checks.

Jury Awards \$10M against Dentist for Allegedly Negligent Root Canal

A Georgia jury has found in favor of a patient who suffered a broken tooth and continues to experience extreme pain after a root canal, according to an article in the June 2023 *Medical Malpractice Verdicts, Settlements & Experts*.

The patient's general dentist recommended a root canal, which needed to be performed by an endodontist who came to the office once per month. The patient decided that she could not wait for the next endodontist visit and sought another provider. The patient elected to see a different general dentist who described herself as a specialist in root canals.

The dentist performing the root canal broke through the apex of the tooth during the procedure, allowing the plastic substance used to fill the tooth to accumulate. The accumulation was not addressed within the 72-hour window necessary to avoid permanent effects, leaving the patient with permanent nerve pain.

As a result, the patient cannot accomplish everyday tasks such as brushing her teeth, or even smiling, without experiencing extreme pain.

The patient sued, alleging that the dentist was negligent in performing the procedure and in failing to correct the error when it occurred. The patient further alleged that the dentist was not properly credentialed to perform the root canal despite her self-description as a specialist. The jury returned a \$10 million verdict against the dentist.

ECRI Resources:

- [Dental Risk Management Training Program](#)
- [Ambulatory Medical and Dental Risk Management Assessment Tool](#)
- [Resource Collection: Credentialing and Privileging Toolkit](#)

ECRI Commentary: As with all complex organizations and services, errors can occur in dentistry. While claims in dentistry are generally less frequent and less severe than in medical practice, this case illustrates that large awards do still occur. Dental offices will benefit from robust risk management programs that identify high-risk procedures and implement effective credentialing, privileging, peer review, and other quality assurance methods to promote patient safety.

This abstract is a summary of a recent court decision, verdict, settlement, or other action affecting healthcare organizations and their risk management programs. When reviewing this abstract, keep in mind that laws and court decisions vary

among jurisdictions and that decisions of lower courts may be overturned on appeal. For specific legal guidance regarding the significance or applicability of this decision, contact legal counsel.



ECRI Headquarters, 5200 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462, 610.825.6000

[Manage preferences](#)