

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.



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Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care is a biweekly service provided by ECRI and the Cooperative of American Physicians (CAP). We welcome your comments; please send them to AmbulatoryCareRM@ecri.org.



Patient Safety & Relations

Hand Hygiene Performance Rates Change Depending on Time of Day

What's the news. An automated hand hygiene monitoring system identified and compared trends of hand hygiene performance rates over different timescales, finding that median hand hygiene rates—calculated as alcohol-based handrub and soap dispense events per 100 hand hygiene opportunities, defined as patient room entries and exits—peaked at 50.0 between 6 am and 7 am, and were lowest at 38.2 at 5 pm, with lower rates potentially attributable to hand hygiene fatigue, progressive skin irritation, general fatigue, and heavy workload, according to a study published in the [December 2024 issue of the *American Journal of Infection Control*](#).

Why it matters. Hand hygiene is an essential practice for preventing the transmission of infections, and understanding when provider compliance is lowest can help organizations implement appropriate improvement strategies.

How ECRI can help. Use the resources [Hand Hygiene](#) and [Reality Check: Hand Hygiene in 20 Seconds?](#) to address these issues. Also see [Resource Collection: Infection Control](#) for more.

Nurse Burnout Associated with Lower Healthcare Quality and Patient Satisfaction

What's the news. Nurse burnout was associated with a lower patient safety climate; more infections, patient falls, medication errors, and adverse events; lower patient satisfaction ratings; and lower nurse-assessed quality of care, according to a [study published November 5, 2024, in *JAMA Network Open*](#). These results were consistent across nurse age, sex, work experience, and geography.

Why it matters. Organizational strategies and initiatives to improve nurse burnout may improve patient outcomes and satisfaction.

How ECRI can help. The article [Improving Healthcare Worker Well-Being](#) discusses how to assess, measure, and track worker well-being, and how to implement or improve support programs and resources.

Worker & Environmental Safety

Workplace Health, Safety Perceptions Play Key Role in Personal Health of Black Nurses

What's the news. Perceptions of workplace health and safety substantially contribute to perceptions of personal health among US nurses who self-identify as Black or African American, according to a [study in the November issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*](#), highlighting the importance of maintaining safe work environments. A majority of nurses reported feeling valued and supported in ways that create safety; however, approximately a quarter of nurses reported experiencing various types of aggression from patients (27%), leaders (23%), and peers (29%).

Why it matters. Working in healthcare is an inherently stressful occupation. Across care settings, medical disciplines, and roles, healthcare workers are at increased risk of experiencing occupational burnout and workplace violence that affect their physical, emotional, and psychosocial well-being. Research has consistently shown a relationship between burnout, workplace violence, and poor well-being, and has noted general increases in the prevalence rates of all three that coincide with significant changes in societal circumstances.

How ECRI can help. The article [Improving Healthcare Worker Well-Being](#) discusses how healthcare organizations can measure the physical and emotional well-being of healthcare workers and develop or improve strategies to address gaps in employee support systems.

Legal & Regulatory

Posters Can Aid in Infection Control

What's the news. Posting messages reminding people to not touch their face in public spaces is a potentially low-cost, effective strategy to reduce face-touching

behaviors, according to a [study in the December 2024 issue](#) of the *American Journal of Infection Control* of students at a US public university. Researchers noted that messages with reduced complexity and plain language may result in better received messages; for example, using simple direct instructions such as "Germs enter your body through your eyes, nose, and mouth, so keep your fingers away!"

Why it matters. Unconscious, spontaneous face-touching is a common behavior, and can transmit pathogens either from or to the person's facial mucous membranes.

How ECRI can help. Use the resources [Hand Hygiene](#) and [Reality Check: Hand Hygiene in 20 Seconds?](#) for more information on this topic. Also see [Resource Collection: Infection Control](#).

MPL Lawsuit Spending Rises Despite Decrease in Overall Number of Cases

What's the news. The average amount spent overall on medical professional liability (MPL) lawsuits continues to increase even as the number of lawsuits has decreased over the past decade, according to an [article in the November 2024 issue of Inside Medical Liability](#). The article discusses how MPL awards and settlements are determined, the possibility of a future MPL crisis, and the role physicians play in reforming the MPL landscape.

Why it matters. MPL spending impacts the financial stability of healthcare providers. Payments into MPL insurance are made years before they may be needed, and it can be difficult to predict future trends in the MPL landscape.

How ECRI can help. Find guidance and sample tools in [Resource Collection: Claims Management](#).



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