

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](mailto: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](mailto:AmbulatoryCareRM@ecri.org).



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## **ECRI Welcomes The Just Culture Company**

ECRI is excited to welcome The Just Culture Company to its portfolio of solutions. The Just Culture Company is a leader in advisory services and educational programs to assist organizations foster fair and accountable organizational cultures. Their proprietary algorithm and proven framework help organizations prevent harm by shifting from reactive responses to proactive system design. To show our appreciation for being a valued client, and to offer you an opportunity to experience The Just Culture Company programs firsthand, now through February 8, all ECRI and ISMP clients will receive a 20% discount on Just Culture on-line training programs listed below. Please enter the discount code **ECRI+TJCC20** at checkout.

- [\*\*Just Culture Master Certification Course\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Just Culture Certification Course\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Just Culture for Managers and Influencers\*\*](#)
- [\*\*The Just Culture Conduct Course for Healthcare Managers and Influencers\*\*](#)

[\*\*Learn more about The Just Culture Company joining ECRI\*\*](#)

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**What's New?**

- SPECIAL REPORT: Déjà Vu in Healthcare Tech Hazards: Why Are We Stuck on Repeat? [view](#)
- AI in Healthcare Applications and the Potential for Preventable Harm [read now](#)
- The Science of Safety: Transforming Healthcare Through Human Factors [register to view](#)



## Patient Safety & Relations

### RSV Vaccine 90% Effective against Related Older Adult Hospitalization, ED Visits

**What's the news.** Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prefusion F (RSVpreF) substantially reduces severe medically attended respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) among older adults, according to a [study published December 13, 2024, in JAMA Network Open](#). Researchers say RSVpreF vaccination among older adults was found to be at least 90% effective against RSV-related hospitalization and emergency department (ED) events among adults age 60 years and older, the majority of whom were older than 75 years and had baseline comorbidities.

**Why it matters.** RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms, but in older adults, it may develop into severe RSV and require hospitalization. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [recommends all adults](#) ages 75 and older get an RSV vaccine, and adults between ages 60 and 74 at increased risk of severe RSV get a vaccine.

**How ECRI can help.** The guidance article [Vaccination Safety](#) discusses patient-facing issues related to vaccination, including preparation and administration, staff education and competencies, and communication with patients about vaccine safety.

### Norovirus Outbreaks Surge in US, with 91 Outbreaks in First Week of December

**What's the news.** US norovirus outbreaks are surging, according to [recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), with 91 outbreaks in the first week of December 2024, rising far higher than the number of US outbreaks in recent years. Healthcare providers should report all outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis, including suspected outbreaks of norovirus, to their state, local, or territorial health department, [according to CDC](#).

**Why it matters.** Most norovirus outbreaks happen when infected people spread the virus to others through direct contact, according to CDC's [page on Norovirus Outbreaks](#). Norovirus can be introduced into healthcare facilities by infected patients, staff, visitors, or contaminated foods.

**How ECRI can help.** The article [Hand Hygiene](#) describes national and international guidelines related to hand hygiene and provides recommendations on how to monitor and improve hand hygiene compliance.

## **Complete Action Plans Increased ACP Documentation and Engagement**

**What's the news.** Among English- and Spanish-speaking older adults, creating an action plan resulted in greater advance care planning (ACP) documentation and engagement, with 49.8% of participants who completed an action plan documenting ACP in their electronic health record versus 35.6% of those who did not complete one, according to a [study published in the December 2024 issue](#) of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. Participants with limited health literacy were less likely to complete an action plan than those with adequate health literacy.

**Why it matters.** ACP is a key element of person-centered care and shared decision-making—two essential components of high-quality healthcare that lay the foundation for a respectful partnership among patients, their appointed healthcare decision-makers, and providers.

**How ECRI can help.** The [Advance Care Planning: Office-Based Care](#) toolkit can help ensure that ACP discussions are completed, optimized, and well documented.

## **No Human-to-Human Transmission of H5N1 Bird Flu So Far, Most Cases Mild, Study Says**

**What's the news.** No human-to-human transmission has been identified among patients with a laboratory-confirmed A(H5N1) virus infection, also known as bird flu, according to a [study published December 31, 2024, in the \*New England Journal of Medicine\*](#). In cases identified as of the study's publication date, viruses generally caused mild illness, most often conjunctivitis, of short duration, predominantly in US adults exposed to infected animals, researchers say.

**Why it matters.** There have been 66 confirmed reported cases of bird flu in people in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [H5 Bird Flu: Current Situation](#).

**How ECRI can help.** The article [Environmental Safety and Security](#) discusses the importance of implementing screening procedures to identify exposure to certain diseases, and of providing sufficient supplies of appropriate personal protective equipment to protect against infection risks.

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## **Worker & Environmental Safety**

### **Higher Physician Engagement in Addressing Patient Social Needs Related to Burnout**

**What's the news.** Higher physician engagement in addressing patient's health-related social needs is associated with a high rate of burnout, according to a [study](#)

**published December 30, 2024, in *JAMA Network Open***. Over 34% of physicians reported high engagement with health-related social needs; researchers characterize related burnout as an unintended consequence of such engagement, which can include tasks such as screening and connecting patients to social services, showing the need for further assessment of its potential impacts.

**Why it matters.** Physician involvement in addressing patient's health-related social needs may continue to increase, researchers say, noting that in January 2024, the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services introduced a new payment code to reimburse physicians to administer a social determinants of health risk assessment no more than once every six months.

**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.



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