

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).



**ECRI**

## Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care

**July 1, 2025**

*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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### Spotlight on Discharge Coordination, Communication

Effective communication is critical to establishing a postdischarge plan for successful patient recovery. One of the most common causes of medical errors is communication failure, and a **majority (67%) of these failures occur during handoffs**, including discharge. Communication between healthcare professionals after a patient is discharged often relies on discharge summaries. Discharge summaries that lack essential details or use unclear language, such as abbreviations, can lead to misdiagnoses or delays in treatment, especially for patients with complex medical conditions. ECRI listed **Inadequate Communication and Coordination during Discharge** as a top patient safety concern in 2025.

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**What's New?**

- Resource Hub: Artificial Intelligence Insights for Healthcare and Government Leaders [see more](#)
- ECRI Blog: That gruesome Magnetic Resonance movie scene from “Final Destination: Bloodlines” – is it possible? [read now](#)
- News: Veteran healthcare program SALUTE from ECRI is spreading nationwide [read now](#)

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## Patient Safety & Relations

### Self-Reported Maternal Physical and Mental Health Declined from 2016 to 2023

**What's the news.** Among nearly 200,000 female parents of children aged 0 to 17 years, self-reported physical and mental health declined from 2016 to 2023, according to a [study published May 27, 2025, in \*JAMA Internal Medicine\*](#). Mental health declines were observed across all socioeconomic groups; however, physical and mental health status was significantly lower for single female patients, those with less education, and those with publicly insured or uninsured children.

**Why it matters.** Study findings highlight the importance of investigating and addressing the causes of physical and mental health decline among female parents.

**How ECRI can help.** The [Resource Collection: Obstetric and Maternal Health and Safety](#) provides guidance, tools, and more to help organizations support maternal well-being.

### Digital Intervention May Help Primary Care Improve Patients' Depression Outcomes

**What's the news.** Primary care patients who received a digital behavioral activation intervention, either with or without electronic health record integration, experienced significantly improved depression outcomes over 12 weeks versus patients who received usual care, according to a [recent study published in \*JAMA Internal Medicine\*](#). Participants in the intervention group had “2.5 to 3.0 times higher odds of having a clinically significant improvement in depression symptoms,” and 33% of patients continued to use the digital intervention after 12 weeks.

**Why it matters.** More than two-thirds of US adults who screen positive for depression do not receive treatment, the authors say, citing an [October 2016 study published in \*JAMA Internal Medicine\*](#).

**How ECRI can help.** ECRI discusses the importance of screening and points to insurer requirements in [Ask ECRI: Screening Patients for Substance Use, Anxiety, and Depression](#).

## **Low-Technology Intervention to Reduce Hospital-at-Home Medication Errors**

**What's the news.** Using a low-technology medication safety intervention based on a medication storage box and color-coded files led to a reduction in medication errors from 12% to 6.9% among a group of hospital-at-home patients, according to a [study in the June 2025 issue of the \*American Journal of Nursing\*](#). The authors piloted their program with five patients before the intervention was implemented with 260 patients, who were compared to 292 patients from a preintervention period. The file box was lightweight and suited to hold standard 9x6-inch blister cards, and it included a securable lid with handles and visual reminders to initiate a video call with a nurse before any medication administration.

**Why it matters.** Despite frequent medication changes throughout hospital-at-home programs, the authors note that "no standard system exists for storing and organizing medications during home hospitalization." This intervention attempts to identify a low-cost, easily implemented intervention to combat resultant errors.

**How ECRI can help.** Organizations can use the infographic [Critical Opportunities for Medication Reconciliation in Ambulatory Care](#) to identify important transition points for ensuring patients have the right medications at any point in their clinical progression.

## **Family Caregivers of Patients with Dementia Tell Where They Most Need Support**

**What's the news.** Family caregivers of patients with dementia report a need for support in four main areas: dementia-specific education and training, competent mental health support, financial and legal navigation, and emergency readiness, according to a [journal article published in the June 2025 issue of \*The Gerontologist\*](#). Personalized caregiving navigation and technology are "potential solutions to facilitate clinical pathways between unmet needs and relevant services."

**Why it matters.** Family caregivers of patients with dementia are often unpaid and may struggle to navigate dementia care with limited resources and support while having to make care decisions and navigate a complicated healthcare landscape. These issues can lead to suboptimal care for the patient with dementia, even unintentionally.

**How ECRI can help.** The guidance article [Managing Dementia in Primary Care](#) provides an overview of current best practices for managing patients with dementia in primary care, including how to support family caregivers; discusses risks that may

arise if dementia care is not optimized; and provides mitigation strategies to improve the quality of primary care for those with dementia.

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## Worker & Environmental Safety

### Over 1,200 Confirmed Measles Cases Reported This Year

**What's the news.** As of June 24, 2025, there have been 1,227 confirmed cases of measles across 37 jurisdictions; nearly all cases (95%) are among individuals who are unvaccinated or with unknown vaccination status, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's page on [Measles Cases and Outbreaks](#). There have been 21 outbreaks in 2025, and 90% of confirmed cases are associated with outbreaks. There have been 23 outbreaks in 2025, and 89% of confirmed cases are associated with outbreaks.

**Why it matters.** Measles cases and outbreaks have been increasing in recent years, emphasizing the importance of encouraging patients to get the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine, especially for children.

**How ECRI can help.** The guidance article [Immunization of Healthcare Personnel](#) discusses standards and guidelines addressing immunization of healthcare personnel, costs associated with vaccine-preventable illnesses in healthcare facilities, and methods to promote vaccination of personnel.

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## Legal & Regulatory

### Healthcare Experienced Second Most Cybersecurity Threats in 2024

**What's the news.** Healthcare and public health experienced more ransomware and data breach threats—238 and 206, respectively—than any other critical infrastructure industry except for critical manufacturing in 2024, according to the recently published [Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Report 2024](#).

**Why it matters.** Cybersecurity attacks are an urgent concern and can have dire consequences for healthcare organizations, including negative effects on patient care, operational disruptions, and data breaches.

**How ECRI can help.** The guidance article [Cybersecurity in Ambulatory Care](#) discusses the importance of cybersecurity and key steps that risk management and patient safety professionals can take to bolster their organization's preparedness for and response to cyberattacks.



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