

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.



Spotlight: August Is Immunization Awareness Month

August is **National Immunization Awareness Month**, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC), an annual observance that marks the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent many infectious diseases. Despite widespread misinformation in recent years, vaccines are a safe way to prevent common diseases that can seriously harm, or even kill, infants, children, and adults, according to the CDC's page **[Reasons to Vaccinate](#)**. ECRI's resources are here to help your organization manage vaccinations for staff and patients of all ages.

- [Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2025: The Wide Availability and Viral Spread of Medical Misinformation: Empowering Patients through Health Literacy](#)
- [Vaccination Safety](#)
- [Educate Parents: Childhood Vaccinations Are as Important as Ever](#)



What's New?

- Evidence review suggests COVID-19 vaccines safe for pregnant women and their babies **[download the white paper](#)**
- Blog: Study examines safety, cost and environmental tradeoffs of re-using versus discarding medical devices **[read now](#)**

Patient Safety & Relations

Predictive Model Can Separate Patient Harm from Patient Complaints, Study Says

What's the news. A predictive model shows promise in identifying genuine patient harm incidents from service complaints from patients or patients' families, according to a [study published July 18, 2025, in *BMC Health Services Research*](#). Researchers identified key predictors of patient harm incidents, including "choice of treatment methods, healthcare providers' professional behavior, and the nature of the complaints," and were able to predict a high level of patient harm incidents.

Why it matters. Patient harm incidents can include allegations of physical or psychological injury following medical care, diagnostic error, treatment-related incidents, intensive care transfers, and even death. Grievances filed by patients in scenarios such as these are vital to address in a timely and sufficient manner.

How ECRI can help. The article [Managing Patient Complaints and Grievances](#) distinguishes between complaints and grievances and how they can be used for quality improvement activities.

RSV Hospitalization Associated with Higher Rates of Cardiovascular Events

What's the news. Among adults age 65 or older hospitalized with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza, urinary tract infection, or fracture between 2011 and 2020, RSV hospitalization was associated with a higher rate of subsequent heart failure events, both in patients with or without preexisting cardiovascular conditions, as well as higher rates of atrial fibrillation, according to a [study published July 23, 2025, in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*](#).

Why it matters. Study findings highlight the importance of RSV vaccination among older adults to prevent potential cardiovascular events regardless of preexisting history.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named [Vaccine Coverage Gaps and Errors](#) among its top 10 patient safety concerns in 2022.

Three-and-a-Half Years Average Time to Diagnose Patient with Dementia, Study Says

What's the news. Three-and-a-half years is the average amount of time it takes to diagnose a patient with dementia from the time of recorded symptom onset to final diagnosis, according to a [review article published July 27, 2025, in the *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*](#). Longer diagnostic intervals were found among patients with younger age at onset and frontotemporal dementia.

Why it matters. Despite the consensus on clinical and neuropathological diagnostic criteria for dementia disorders, no methods carry 100% diagnostic accuracy.

Therefore, diagnostic errors and delays may occur, potentially culminating in over- or underdiagnosis of dementia, misdiagnosis of the wrong type of dementia, or misdiagnosis of a nondementia-related illness or condition.

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; 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.

Worker & Environmental Safety

Baltimore Nurses Strike over Patient Safety, Staffing Concerns

What's the news. Nurses at a Baltimore hospital held a one-day strike over concerns related to patient safety and staffing levels, according to a [July 24, 2025, CBS News article](#). The nurses' union has been in contract negotiations with the hospital since January 2024, and nearly 10% of the nursing staff left their jobs between April and July 2024 due to working conditions, according to one of the hospital's nurses. Nurses also cited concerns about "floating procedures, a practice in which nurses are assigned to different areas of the hospital that they may not be familiar with."

Why it matters. Labor disputes may represent genuine patient safety issues that a healthcare organization must address in order to provide safe, effective, high-quality care. Under the National Labor Relations Act, employees may self-organize; form, join, or assist labor organizations; bargain collectively with their employer through representatives of their own choosing; and engage in other concerted labor activities for mutual aid or protection.

How ECRI can help. The [Ask ECRI: Social Media and Free Speech: Are Employees Protected?](#) discusses how organizations can balance employees' rights to free speech with the company policy on not posting negative comments on social media.

Legal & Regulatory

US Department of Labor Announces Self-Audit Programs to Improve Compliance

What's the news. The US Department of Labor has announced several new and updated self-audit programs to help employers, unions, and pension plans voluntarily assess and improve compliance with federal labor laws in order to enhance worker protections and reduce the likelihood of formal investigation or litigation, according to a [July 24, 2025, news release](#).

Why it matters. Organizations that do not comply with federal labor laws may face investigations, fines, and litigation, as well as reputational damage.

How ECRI can help. The [Resource Collection: Laws, Regulations, and Compliance](#) provides guidance, risk assessments, tools, and more to help organizations maintain compliance with state and federal laws and regulations.



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