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 Yvette Ervin, Vice President, CAPIC Risk Management, at YErvin@CAPphysicians.com.

ECRI
Strategic Insights for Ambulatory Care

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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**.

COOPERATIVE OF AMERICAN PHYSICIANS

Top 10 Health Technology Hazards for 2026

The safe use of healthcare technology—from simple medical devices and supplies to complex information systems—requires identifying possible sources of danger or difficulty with those technologies and taking steps to minimize the risks and prevent harm. ECRI's **Top 10 Health Technology Hazards report**, now in its 19th year, identifies the potential sources of technology-related danger that ECRI's experts believe warrant the greatest attention for the coming year and offers practical solutions to safeguard patient care.

- The Misuse of AI Chatbots in Healthcare
- Unpreparedness for a "Digital Darkness" Event
- The Growing Challenge of Combating Substandard and Falsified Medical Products
- Recall Communication Failures for Home Diabetes Management Technologies
- Tubing Misconnections Remain a Threat Amid Slow ENFit and NRFit Adoption

What's New?

- Case Studies: Protecting Patients Strengthens the Bottom Line **read now**

Patient Safety & Relations

Opioid Safety Dashboards Can Support Safe Opioid Prescribing

What's the news. Utilization of an opioid safety dashboard—which lists patient-level information and related opioid safety measures—can help support safe opioid prescribing; however, clinician perspectives and interactions with the dashboard should be assessed to ensure they are actionable and effective, according to a **study published in the January 2026 issue of the** *Journal of Patient Safety*.

Why it matters. Safe opioid prescribing is an essential component of overall medication safety and pain management.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article **Medication Safety** discusses strategies that organizations can implement to prevent medication-related adverse events.

New Event Reporting System Improved Near-Miss Reporting and Staff Engagement

What's the news. A new patient safety event reporting system that streamlined reporting, centralized data analysis, and enhanced transparency significantly increased near-miss and no-harm event reporting from 60% preimplementation to 80% after implementation, according to a **study published in the January 2026 issue of the** *Journal of Patient Safety*. An increase in the number of unique event reporters and reviews also demonstrated improved staff engagement.

Why it matters. Event reporting is essential for identifying potential risks and ensuring patient safety. Implementing strategies and systems to improve reporting can help strengthen a culture of safety.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article **Event Reporting in Ambulatory Care** provides an overview of event reporting systems, regulatory influences, and common barriers to reporting, followed by a comprehensive discussion of best practices to facilitate effective reporting.

Worker & Environmental Safety

Health Department Investigations in Outpatient Settings Identify Infection Risks

What's the news. Analysis of health department investigations scrutinizing outpatient settings found that 64% investigated healthcare-associated infections and 36% investigated novel or targeted multidrug-resistant organisms, with infection control breaches and device reprocessing breaches being common, according to a **study published in the January 2026 issue of the** *American Journal of Infection Control*.

Why it matters. Identifying infection risks in outpatient settings can help organizations improve infection prevention strategies and enhance patient safety.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article **Infection Prevention and Control** provides an overview of infection prevention and control in the office setting.

Legal & Regulatory

Use of Shadow AI Raises Concerns About Cybersecurity, Data Privacy, Patient Safety

What's the news. Forty percent of surveyed healthcare professionals encountered shadow AI (i.e., unauthorized AI tools or apps) in their organization, and 17% had used one, raising concerns about cybersecurity, data privacy, and patient safety, according to a recent **Wolters Kluwer survey**.

Why it matters. Implementing organization-wide guidelines for AI usage can help mitigate such risks and facilitate responsible AI use among staff.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named **Insufficient Governance of Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare** among the top 10 patient safety concerns in 2025.

US Supreme Court Decision May Lead to Increased Malpractice Cases in Federal Court

What's the news. The US Supreme Court's decision in *Berk v. Choy* means that medical malpractice defendants can no longer rely on state affidavit-of-merit requirements in healthcare liability actions to screen out cases filed in federal court, which could result in increased federal filings, higher costs, and broader discovery obligations, among other concerns, according to a **January 22, 2026, article** by a national law firm.

Why it matters. Staying abreast of judicial interpretations as they relate to malpractice is foundational to a risk manager's duty to reduce liability exposure and ensure financial stability for their healthcare organization.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article **Legal Basics** provides an overview of general legal principles, as well as more specific information about vicarious liability, responding to subpoenas, and what to expect if a physician's practice becomes involved in malpractice litigations.

Manage preferences