

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



Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2026

ECRI has published our [**Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2026**](#), and this year's concerns reflect broad, systemic threats to the delivery of safe, equitable, and reliable healthcare. These issues reveal how vulnerabilities in technology, staffing, culture, and public health all intersect to increase patient risk.

The List for 2026

1. [Navigating the AI Diagnostic Dilemma](#)
2. [Reduced Access to Rural Healthcare Increases Health Risks and Disparities](#)
3. [Increasing Rates of Preventable Acute Diseases in Communities and Healthcare Settings](#)

Ready to read the full top 10?

[Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2026](#)

What's New?

- Blog: When Healthcare Systems Go Dark: Why Digital Outage Preparedness Is a Patient Safety Imperative [read now](#)

Patient Safety & Relations

Over 80% of Physicians Use AI, Cite Potential Benefits and Concerns

What's the news. A survey of nearly 1,700 physicians found that more than 80% of respondents use AI in a professional context, with most use cases involving documentation and summarization, and physicians reported potential benefits in diagnostic ability and work efficiency while remaining concerned about patient privacy, according to the [American Medical Association's 2026 Physician Survey on Augmented Intelligence](#).

Why it matters. A survey of nearly 1,700 physicians found that more than 80% of respondents use AI in a professional context, with most use cases involving documentation and summarization, and physicians reported potential benefits in diagnostic ability and work efficiency while remaining concerned about patient privacy, according to the [American Medical Association's 2026 Physician Survey on Augmented Intelligence](#).

How ECRI can help. ECRI named [Navigating the AI Diagnostic Dilemma](#) among its top 10 patient safety concerns in 2026.

Discrepancies Between Actual and Perceived Hand Hygiene Compliance

What's the news. Nurses and physicians self-reported that they perform hand hygiene with more than 90% adherence; however, nurses performed hand hygiene in only 46.2% of recommended situations and physicians in 82.8%; the disconnect between perceived and actual compliance may be due to biases or time pressures, according to a [study published in the March 2026 issue](#) of the *American Journal of Infection Control*.

Why it matters. Proper hand hygiene is an essential component of infection prevention, and organizations must address barriers to compliance, including erroneous self-perception.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article [Hand Hygiene](#) outlines standards and guidelines related to hand hygiene and provides recommendations on how to monitor and improve hand hygiene compliance.

Health-Related Social Needs Screening and Interventions May Help Improve Care

What's the news. A pediatric hospital system increased health-related social needs screening, with positive screens receiving interventions; food insecurity was identified in 17.6% of encounters, with a 56% decrease in prevalence on repeat screening after intervention, according to a [study published in the March 2026 issue of *Pediatrics*](#).

Why it matters. Screening for health-related social needs and connecting patients to appropriate resources can improve patient safety and outcomes.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article [Person-Centered Care](#) discusses patient-centered care in its broadest sense and provides information and resources that organizations can use to identify and implement person-centered practices.

Legal & Regulatory

AI Prompts May Be Considered Discoverable, According to Recent Court Case

What's the news. Prompts given to public, nonenterprise AI platforms and any documents generated may be considered discoverable during litigation, according to a [March 19, 2026, article](#) by a national law firm.

Why it matters. If use of a public AI tool amounts to public disclosure in the court's opinion, healthcare organizations must protect their sensitive content—even when that content is just for organizational use and not protected health information, as in the *United States v. Heppner* case.

How ECRI can help. The guidance article [Overview of the Risk Management Process](#) discusses certain considerations related to discovery.

Diagnostic Errors Related to Health IT Often Associated with the EHR

What's the news. Almost 60% of diagnostic error event reports that mentioned health IT as a contributing factor were associated with electronic health records (EHR), and 75% of those errors occurred in the test phase of the diagnostic process, according to a [study published in the March 2026 issue](#) of the *Journal of Patient Safety*.

Why it matters. Understanding common contributors to diagnostic error can help organizations identify effective strategies to prevent it, such as improving health IT systems.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named **Complexity of Preventing Diagnostic Error** among its top 10 patient safety concerns in 2024.



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