

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).



Learn More About Your Membership

Attend a live demo **April 23, 2026, at 1:00 pm ET**, or **contact us** to schedule an individualized demo for your team.

Spotlight on Informed Consent

Obtaining a patient's informed consent is a process of communication established and guided by professional codes of ethics, statutes, regulations, and case law, as well as addressed in accreditation standards. Even so, failure to obtain informed consent is a common allegation in medical malpractice suits, as patients frequently cannot answer basic questions about the medical care they consented to or already received, and many have misconceptions about the purposes of consent forms that they sign. Without adequate informed consent, patients are at risk of adverse health outcomes, and providers and clinicians consequently risk liability exposure.

- **Informed Consent in Office-Based Care**
- **Informed Refusal**
- **Informed Consent Training Program**

- **Resource Collection: Informed Consent/Informed Refusal**
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In the News

Urgent Care May Help Close Gaps in Reproductive Health Services in Rural Areas

What's the news. Urgent care clinics may help fill reproductive care access gaps in rural areas as closures of inpatient labor and delivery units, Planned Parenthoods, and other reproductive health facilities leave communities without in-person resources for cancer screenings, contraception, and medication abortions, according to an **April 8, 2026, KFF Health News article**.

Why it matters. Ambulatory care leaders in rural settings who are considering expanding (or who have already expanded) scope of services to meet this need must address the associated liability exposure, staff competency requirements, and documentation obligations, particularly in states with evolving legal landscapes around reproductive care.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named **Clinician Needs in Times of Uncertainty Surrounding Maternal-Fetal Medicine** and **Barriers to Access Maternal and Perinatal Care** as top patient safety concerns in 2023 and 2024, respectively, to provide recommendations on how to legally navigate these challenges.

- **Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2023: Clinician Needs in Times of Uncertainty Surrounding Maternal-Fetal Medicine**
- **Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2024: Barriers to Access Maternal and Perinatal Care**
- **Navigating Challenges in Rural Healthcare**

Measles Tops 1,700 Cases So Far in 2026

What's the news. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports 1,748 confirmed measles cases and 19 new outbreaks in the United States so far this year as of **April 16, 2026**. Most cases are among individuals age 5 to 19 (51%) and those with an unknown or unvaccinated status (92%). More than 660 of these cases were reported in South Carolina.

Why it matters. Physician offices and walk-in clinics serve as frequent first points of contact for symptomatic patients, making exposure-control protocols and staff immunization status critical operational concerns.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named **Increasing Rates of Preventable Acute Diseases in Communities and Healthcare Settings** as the third top patient safety concern for 2026, partly due to the steep resurgence of measles.

- **Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2026: Increasing Rates of Preventable Acute Diseases in Communities and Healthcare Settings**
- **Resource Collection: Vaccine and Immunization**

Diagnosis Issues Drive Most Pediatric Malpractice Claims, Says The Doctors Company

What's the news. The top allegations among pediatric malpractice claims from 2010 to 2025 were related to diagnosis (52%), medical treatment (29%), medication (5%), and surgical treatment (5%), according to The Doctors Company's **April 2026 Malpractice Risk Review**. Clinical judgment and communication issues were identified as the most prevalent contributing factors.

Why it matters. Analyzing malpractice trends is a key component to quality and performance improvement. Findings can help identify high-risk areas that may not be visible in day-to-day practice and prioritize review of risk mitigation strategies.

How ECRI can help. The resource collections on **Diagnosis: Safety and Screening** and **Diagnosis: Test, Referral, and Hospitalization Tracking** offer several guidance articles and tools to improve diagnosis-related practices and processes and mitigate risk.

- **Resource Collection: Diagnosis: Safety and Screening**
- **Resource Collection: Diagnosis: Test, Referral, and Hospitalization Tracking**

Healthcare Data Breaches Increase 14.5% from January to February 2026

What's the news. In February 2026, 63 data breaches were reported to the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR), involving the protected health information (PHI) of more than eight million individuals—a 436% month-

over-month increase over the last 12 months, according to an **April 10, 2026, HIPAA Journal article**.

Why it matters. As part of OCR's risk analysis enforcement initiative, organizations will need to provide "documentation demonstrating that a comprehensive, organization-wide risk analysis has been conducted and that risks identified by the risk analysis have been managed and reduced to a reasonable and acceptable level in a timely manner."

How ECRI can help. Maintaining the security of PHI is a matter of patient safety, not just regulatory compliance. **The HIPAA Security Rule** provides strategies for taking an enterprise-wide risk management approach and using the **Summary and Evaluation Tool: The HIPAA Security Rule's Administrative, Physical, and Technical Safeguards** to identify areas for improvement.

- **The HIPAA Security Rule**
- **Summary and Evaluation Tool: The HIPAA Security Rule's Administrative, Physical, and Technical Safeguards**
- **Cybersecurity in Ambulatory Care**



ECRI and ISMP Headquarters, 3959 Welsh Road, #364, Willow Grove, PA 19090, 610.825.6000