

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

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.



What's New?

Ask ECRI: Managing Medical Records When New Patient Is a No-Show [read now](#)

Spotlight on Vaccination Awareness

Vaccinations are an important tool for building immunity to prevent illness, disability, and death resulting from infectious diseases. However, preventable illnesses are resurging due in part to declining immunization coverage, vaccine hesitancy, confusion over vaccination schedules, and misinformation on evidence-based treatment. To be effective, vaccines must be administered in a safe, accurate, and timely manner. Healthcare organizations should adopt systems solutions for safe and effective management of an evidence-based vaccination program. In addition, physicians and other clinicians who administer vaccines should be prepared to address questions and concerns from patients and the parents of children receiving vaccinations.

- **Changes to Childhood Vaccine Recommendations Threaten Public Health**
- **Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2026: Increasing Rates of Preventable Acute Diseases in Communities and Healthcare Settings**

- **Top 10 Patient Safety Concerns 2022: Vaccine Coverage Gaps and Errors**
 - **Vaccination Safety**
 - **Safety First for Staff: Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy**
 - **Vaccination Management**
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In the News

Vaccination Rates Decline Among Kindergarteners

What's the news. Vaccination coverage among kindergartners decreased for all reported vaccines during the 2025-2026 school year compared with the previous year, and exemptions from one or more vaccines increased from 3.6% to 4.2%, according to **data released August 17, 2026, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**. This marks the **fourth straight year** that the national average exemption rate has reached a new record. As of August 13, 2026, more than **2,500 measles cases have been reported** by 47 US jurisdictions, with 38 new outbreaks reported this year; 94% (2,407) of confirmed cases are associated with an outbreak.

Why it matters. Ambulatory care physicians and other clinicians who administer vaccines are often the first line of defense against vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. Practitioners should be prepared to address questions and concerns from patients and the parents of children receiving vaccinations.

How ECRI can help. ECRI **released a position statement** emphasizing the importance of following the existing pediatric immunization schedule, which is based on rigorous safety and efficacy testing.

AAAHC Releases New AI Governance Guide for Ambulatory Care Organizations

What's the news. The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) has released the **1095 Advance AI Governance Guide**, a resource that, **according to the organization**, is "designed to help ambulatory care organizations establish practical governance frameworks for the safe, effective, and responsible use of artificial intelligence." The guide addresses four areas: governance, oversight, and accountability; transparency, validation, and accuracy; data security and patient privacy; and meaningful human oversight.

Why it matters. Ambulatory care practices are adopting AI faster than governance structures can keep pace. When an AI-influenced decision contributes to patient harm, responsibility can be difficult to trace across clinicians, organizations, and technology vendors. This makes proactive AI oversight—including clear use policies, staff training, and ongoing performance monitoring—an essential consideration.

How ECRI can help. The template **Policy and Procedure Builder: Artificial Intelligence Governance Policy** can assist in developing a policy and procedure on AI governance for your organization.

Gen Z and Millennials Turn to AI Chatbots Before Primary Care

What's the news. An **Aflac Wellness Matters survey** of 2,000 employed US adults found that 76% of Gen Z and 63% of millennials use artificial intelligence (AI) for health support before seeking professional medical care, with 18% of Gen Z and 14% of millennials waiting until AI/online tools fail before scheduling an appointment. Younger generations are also less likely to have a primary care doctor compared to Gen X and baby boomers, and they are showing an increasing reliance on emergency room and urgent care.

Why it matters. As patients increasingly turn to AI chatbots for health guidance between—and sometimes in place of—outpatient visits, practices should anticipate potential liability and patient safety concerns when that advice conflicts with or delays appropriate care.

How ECRI can help. ECRI named **The Misuse of AI Chatbots in Healthcare** a top technology hazard for 2026, detailing the clinical risks of general-purpose AI chatbots and recommending policies for appropriate and prohibited use in patient care settings.



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