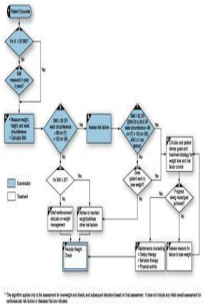
HealthManagement
Promoting Management and Leadership

Medical Errors Up 70% in Massachusetts



Last year, acute care hospitals in Massachusetts recorded a 70 percent spike in serious medical errors and patient injuries, according to a *Boston Globe* report. Health officials, however, attributed the dramatic increase to revised definitions of what constitutes medical harm.

A total of 753 incidents were reported by acute care hospitals in the state in 2013. Other types of hospitals, meanwhile, reported 206 incidents including those where patients received contaminated drugs or underwent procedure on the wrong body part, the *Globe* reported.

In 2008, it became mandatory for hospitals to report medical lapses to the government, patients and their families. With the changes in reporting criteria, hospitals must now report serious injuries, patient death or injury caused by failure to follow up or communicate pathology, radiology or laboratory test results.

This year, it is expected that hospitals and regulators will have a better idea of whether institutions are really experiencing an increase in lapses or if the hefty increase was due to the new reporting criteria.

Patient Safety Improving Across USA

Despite the unfavourable developments in Massachusetts, patient safety in general is improving across the nation. Based on the Leapfrog Group's Spring 2014 update, about one in three hospitals in the US have improved their performance by 10 percent or higher since 2012.

Adverse events are now widely discussed by both hospital staff and management, including C-suite leaders. An article in *U.S News & World Report* cites a study conducted earlier this year that found Miami-based Jackson Memorial Hospital posted a 63 percent improvement in controlling an antibiotic-resistant bug after top-level executives received weekly updates on related incidents.

"A lot of folks who look at safety focus on the things we need to do with nurses and physicians," said Rishi Sikka, senior vice president of clinical transformation at Advocate Healthcare, a 250-site health system located in Downers Grove, Illinois. "But none of that works on the frontline if culture and leadership aren't there."

Source: FierceHealthcare
Image credit: Wikipedia

Published on : Mon, 18 Aug 2014

© For personal and private use only. Reproduction must be permitted by the copyright holder. Email to copyright@mindbyte.eu.