



# Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup> Newsletter

[www.healthwatchusa.org](http://www.healthwatchusa.org) Aug 1, 2015

Member of the National Quality Forum and a designated "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

## Health Watch USA In the News

### ENT Today -- Approach to Medical Mishaps Reduces Malpractice Claims

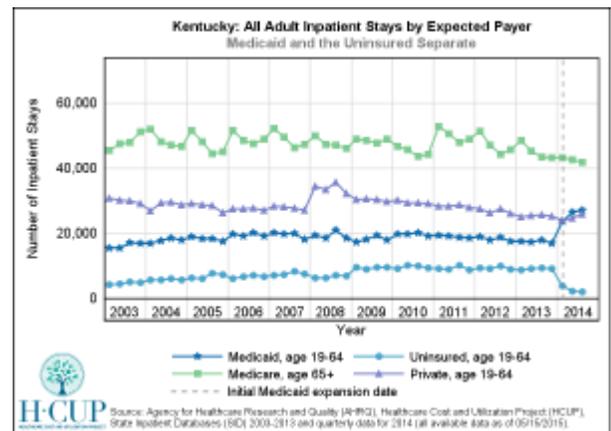
"Patients trust us with their lives," said Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS, a retired otolaryngologist who now chairs the patient safety organization HealthWatch USA and is associate editor of the Journal of Patient Safety. He sees disclosure policies as a key tool in the prevention of adverse events. "It's hard to have a culture of safety when you have a culture of denial and covering up errors. And disclosure is the ethical and moral thing to do."

<http://www.enttoday.org/article/approach-to-medical-mishaps-reduces-malpractice-claims/>

## Healthcare Finance, & Coverage

### Kentucky Close to Achieving Universal Healthcare

New HCUP data on inpatient insurance coverage reveals a dramatic change in Kentucky. The ACA has reduced the level of uninsured to almost zero. As the graph shows, this was not done by increasing the number of individuals with private insurance but by dramatically increasing Medicaid Enrolment. [Click the picture on the right to enlarge](#)



### CMS Predicts Faster Health Spending Growth

"The health share of US gross domestic product is projected to rise from 17.4 percent in 2013 to 19.6 percent in 2024."

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2015/07/15/hlthaff.2015.0600.full>

### Health Care Costs Set to Soar

Washington Post "The biggest beneficiaries will be the shareholders and a handful of top executives; they'll make tens of millions of dollars on the day the transactions become final. Among the losers — in addition to the people enrolled in the insurers' health plans -- will be many of the employees of the acquired companies."

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jul/9/health-care-costs-set-soar/>

## Newly eligible Medicaid beneficiaries more costly to cover than expected

The report, from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' office of the actuary, finds that adults who became eligible for Medicaid in 2014 racked up \$5,517 in average medical costs, overall costing the program \$23.7 billion last year. In comparison, non-newly eligible adults' average benefit costs totaled \$4,650 per person.

[http://www.fiercehealthpayer.com/story/newly-eligible-medicaid-beneficiaries-more-costly-cover-expected/2015-07-13?utm\\_medium=nl&utm\\_source=internal](http://www.fiercehealthpayer.com/story/newly-eligible-medicaid-beneficiaries-more-costly-cover-expected/2015-07-13?utm_medium=nl&utm_source=internal)

## Healthcare Quality

### Serious Risks And Few New Benefits From FDA-Approved Drugs

Health Affairs Blog: "Of almost 1000 new drugs introduced to the FDA between 2002 to 2011 "Only two were breakthrough advances and fewer than 10 percent offered substantial clinical advantages over existing drugs. Yet approved drugs have a 20 percent risk of producing enough harm for regulators to add a serious warning or have them withdrawn." "In other words, anecdotal evidence, rather than the scientific studies, could be used to approve

devices" <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2015/07/06/serious-risks-and-few-new-benefits-from-fda-approved-drugs/> [http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/medicare-proposes-payment-changes-to-hospitals-for-hip-knee-replacement/2015/07/09/9c6a90e0-2675-11e5-aae2-6c4f59b050aa\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/medicare-proposes-payment-changes-to-hospitals-for-hip-knee-replacement/2015/07/09/9c6a90e0-2675-11e5-aae2-6c4f59b050aa_story.html)

### Surgeons Getting a Scorecard by Propublica <https://projects.propublica.org/surgeons/>

USA TODAY: "Surgeons around the country are now scored against their peers in a new statistic developed by a non-profit news organization that goes beyond hospital-level data, providing a never-before-available tool for consumers and generating debate and some angst in the surgical community." <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/07/14/surgeons-scored--new-online-tool/30083213/>

### Online Scorecard Shows Surgeons' Complication Rates

**Medscape:** David Teuscher, MD, president of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), told Medscape Medical News that ProPublica's methodology "looks to be appropriate and fair." However, Dr Teuscher said he wonders if the adjustments to complication rates are granular enough to account for all patient differences."

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/848050>

Giving Doctors Grades. NYT Opinion <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/22/opinion/giving-doctors-grades.html>

## Healthcare Infections

### How your hospital can make you sick

"Consumer Reports' new Ratings of more than 3,000 U.S. hospitals show which do a good job of avoiding MRSA, C.diff, and other deadly infections"

<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2015/07/how-your-hospital-can-make-you->

[sick/index.htm](#)

## HHS Proposes to Improve Care and Safety for Nursing Homes Residents

(From a CDC News Release) A proposal announced at the White House Conference on Aging would make major changes to improve the care and safety of the nearly 1.5 million residents in the more than 15,000 long-term care facilities or nursing homes that participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. If finalized, unnecessary hospital readmissions and infections would be reduced, quality care increased, and safety measures strengthened for the more than one million residents in these facilities.

One of the many proposed changes includes updating the nursing home's infection prevention and control program, including requiring an infection prevention and control officer, and an antibiotic stewardship program that includes antibiotic use protocols and a system to monitor antibiotic use.

The recommended reforms have been published in proposed rule CMS-3260-P, in the July 16, 2015 Federal Register:

- Web Link: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/07/16/2015-17207/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-reform-of-requirements-for-long-term-care-facilities>
- PDF Version: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-07-16/pdf/2015-17207.pdf> [PDF - 880 KB]

There is a 60 day comment period on the proposed revisions. To submit a comment, visit [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), enter the ID number CMS-3260-P (with long dashes), and click on "Submit a Comment."

## There's an infection hospitals can nearly always prevent. Why don't they?

"Central line infections fell 46 percent between 2008 and 2013, a huge success for public health. At the same time, these figures exasperate experts: Given everything we know about preventing central line infections, why do they happen at all?"

<http://www.vox.com/2015/7/9/8905959/medical-harm-infection-prevention>

## Antibiotics, Not Infection, Seen as JIA Trigger

"Kids treated with antibiotics were at doubled risk for juvenile idiopathic arthritis."

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Rheumatology/Arthritis/52690>

## Medical Devices

### The F.D.A.'s Medical Device Problem:

New York Times: Medical Device Oversight has significant deficiencies which has led dangerous devices to enter the market. A new Bill passed by the U.S. House weakens it

further. <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/07/17/opinion/the-fdas-medical-device-problem.html>

## Medicare proposes payment changes to hospitals for hip, knee replacement

Washington Post: "The proposal is designed to hold hospitals accountable for an entire episode of care, from surgery through 90 days after discharge." [http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/medicare-proposes-payment-changes-to-hospitals-for-hip-knee-replacement/2015/07/09/9c6a90e0-2675-11e5-aae2-6c4f59b050aa\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/medicare-proposes-payment-changes-to-hospitals-for-hip-knee-replacement/2015/07/09/9c6a90e0-2675-11e5-aae2-6c4f59b050aa_story.html)

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Health Watch USA - Patient Safety  
Conference  
November 13, 2015  
At the Four Points Sheraton in Lexington, Kentucky

### Speakers Include:

- **Peter Eisler**, Investigative Reporter for USA Today, presenting on the newspaper's role in the assurance of medical quality.
- **Briana Aguirre**, RN, Nurse and Healthcare Quality Advocate who treated the first patient with Ebola in Texas.
- **Kaci Hickox**, MPH, RN, Nurse and Healthcare Quality Advocate who treated patients with Ebola in Africa. She underwent mandatory quarantine upon her return to the United States, despite being asymptomatic and not having any history of a break in contact precaution protocols.
- **Richard Wild**, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer CMS Atlanta Region
- **Kraig Humbaugh** MD, MSP Director, Epidemiology and Health Planning Kentucky Department for Public Health.

Download Conference Flyer: <http://www.healthconference.org/2015conference-downloads/20151113-ConferenceFlyer-SDM.pdf>

For More Information And a Full List of Speakers Go To: [www.healthconference.org](http://www.healthconference.org)

To Register Go To: <http://www.healthconference.org/payment-fax-check.htm>

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## Future Health Watch USA Meetings:

Health Watch USA's next meeting is on Aug. 19th at 7:00 PM ET. We have two excellent speakers.

- Dr. David Mayer, MD, Vice President, Quality and Safety from MedStar Healthcare.  
<http://www.medstarhealth.org/mhs/about-medstar/medstar-health-leadership/david-mayer-md/>
- Mara Rice who will present on HW USA's new paper on how to measure and report Urinary Tract Infections which was published in the American Journal of Infection Control.  
<http://www.ajicjournal.org/article/S0196-6553%2815%2900613-6/fulltext>

This should be an excellent meeting and we will also give updates on our upcoming conference. To attend these meetings over Adobe Connect (using your computer) please email us at [healthwatchusa@gmail.com](mailto:healthwatchusa@gmail.com)

To subscribe to Health Watch USA<sup>sm</sup>  
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