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EDITORS:

Rolando Javier Álvarez Pérez

EDITOR AND PROOFREADER:

MSc.Lic . Ismara Zamora León

Errors in medical practice

José Luis Aparicio Suárez 1ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8897-5683> • Email: posgradominsap@infomed.sld.cu**Évora María Quesada Fernández 2**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0253-9937>

Instituciones

¹ Ministry of Public Health.Havana, Cuba.² Granma University of Medical Sciences.Granma, Cuba.

Content

In medical practice, the occurrence of errors is a complex phenomenon that can have significant repercussions on patient health and the healthcare system. The most common errors often span diverse areas, including diagnosis, treatment, communication, and procedures. The National Postgraduate Directorate of the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP) considers it appropriate to address key aspects of this topic, while encouraging contributions and opinions.

One of the most common errors is misdiagnosis; it can arise from a lack of adequate information, cognitive biases, or insufficient consideration of the patient's condition.

Consequences can include treatment delays, disease progression, and, in extreme cases, mortality.

In the treatment setting, medication errors are prevalent; they can be due to confusion in drug nomenclature, failure to administer (forgetful or deliberate), incorrect dosages, or unrecognized drug interactions.

The repercussions can range from mild adverse effects to serious, life-threatening reactions.

Lack of effective communication among healthcare team members is another factor contributing to errors; it can manifest itself in inadequate communication of information about the patient's condition or unclear medical orders.

The consequence of this communication deficiency can be the repetition of unnecessary tests, inappropriate treatments, or even surgical errors.

Surgical errors, although less common, are particularly serious and may include operations on the wrong site or the performance of unnecessary procedures.

These situations are often associated with failures in verification protocols and can result in severe complications for the patient.

Improper management of medical records is also a common error. Failure to update or omitting relevant data can lead to clinical decisions based on incomplete information.

Consequences can include misdiagnoses and inappropriate treatments.

Lack of adherence to evidence-based clinical guidelines can result in outdated or ineffective practices.

This may be a result of insufficient training or resistance to change on the part of medical staff.

Burnout and stress among healthcare professionals are factors that contribute to errors in care.

Overwork and long hours can impair concentration and clinical judgment, increasing the risk of errors.

It is essential to implement strategies to minimize these errors, such as continuous improvement programs, verification systems, and standardized protocols. Creating a culture of safety in the medical setting is also essential to foster open communication and learning from previous errors. Systematic error identification and analysis are crucial steps to improving the quality of care and ensuring patient safety.

Mistakes, besides being regrettable, are avoidable.

To avoid errors and horrific consequences in medical practice at different levels of care, the National Postgraduate Directorate of the Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP) suggests a series of measures and practices that can improve patient safety and the quality of care.

Promote a culture of safety in healthcare that prioritizes patient well-being.

Implement standardized protocols for managing common conditions and emergencies.

Provide continuous training for medical and nursing staff on best practices and treatment updates.

Promote effective communication among members of the healthcare team.

Use checklists for surgical and diagnostic procedures.

Incorporate technology appropriately, such as electronic medical record systems.

Conduct audits periodically to identify areas for improvement in care.

Encourage active patient participation in their own care.

Establish an incident reporting system without fear of retaliation.

Implement infection prevention strategies at all levels of care.

Ensure that adequate medication reviews are conducted before administration.

Promote interdisciplinary teamwork to address patient needs comprehensively.

Maintain clear and open communication with patients about their diagnosis and treatment.

Establish protocols for the secure transfer of information between levels of care.

Regularly assess staff workload to avoid burnout and human error.

Use clinical decision support tools to guide diagnosis and treatment.

Conduct appropriate follow-up after hospital discharges to ensure continuity of care.

Incorporate telemedicine as a complementary tool in patient monitoring.

Promote the use of complete and accurate medical records.

Implement patient education programs about their condition and treatment.

Appropriately assess and manage the risks associated with invasive procedures.

Ensure that necessary diagnostic tests are performed before starting treatments.

Promote peer review as a common practice in the clinical setting.

Establish a clear system for managing queries and wait times.

Promote transparency in communication about errors or adverse events that have occurred.

Use technology to enhance patient identification, such as barcodes or electronic wristbands, whenever possible and feasible.

Promote an environment where continuous learning and improvement in medical practice are valued.

mentoring programs for new professionals in their field of knowledge.

Ensure that adequate assessments of the patient's mental and physical status are performed prior to interventions.

Develop specific protocols for the management of chronic diseases.

Ensure that all professionals are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency management.

Promote the appropriate use of antibiotics and the prevention of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Implement a system to evaluate patient satisfaction with their care.

Establish clear policies on the safe handling and storage of medications.

Promote communication between medical teams.

Conduct regular training on medical ethics and informed consent.

Ensure that reviews of the medical and technological equipment used are carried out.

Establish a clear protocol for pain management in patients.

Promote the use of validated scales to assess symptoms and clinical conditions.

Provide adequate resources for palliative care and end-of-life management.

Implement an effective time management system.

Conduct clinical case discussion sessions among professionals.

Promote research and updating in new therapies and treatments.

Establish a clear protocol for managing allergies and adverse reactions to medications.

Ensure that institutions conduct periodic reviews of regulatory compliance.

Promote an environment where cultural diversity and patient beliefs are valued.

Implement an effective system for managing patient complaints and claims.

Establish clear protocols for the management of patients with infectious diseases.

Promote the appropriate use of informed consent, ensuring that patients understand their options.

Implement a wellness program for medical staff, promoting their physical and mental health.

Promote the responsible use of medical resources, avoiding unnecessary procedures.

Establish an effective system for managing postoperative follow-up.

Ensure that training activities on the proper handling of medical devices are carried out.

Promote the use of evidence-based practices in all clinical areas.

Implement a continuous program of review and updating of clinical protocols.

Ensure effective communication with family members throughout the care process.

Establish clear policies on stress and burnout management among medical staff.

Promote the inclusion of patients in health care advisory committees.

Conduct regular drills to prepare staff for medical emergencies.

Promote the appropriate use of technical language, ensuring that patients understand their diagnosis.

Implement an effective system for managing the patient's family medical history.

Ensure that periodic reviews are carried out on the effectiveness of the treatments implemented.

Promote the responsible use of diagnostic tests, avoiding unnecessary burdens on patients.

Establish clear protocols for the safe management of patients with critical or unstable conditions.

Foster an organizational culture that values constructive feedback among colleagues.

Implement educational programs on public health and prevention in local communities.

Provide adequate resources for ongoing training in communication skills.

Regularly assess physical facilities to ensure a safe environment for patients.

Promote a patient-centered approach, considering individual preferences and needs.

Establish clear policies on the appropriate use of social media by medical personnel.

Foster an environment where innovation and new ideas are valued in medical practice.

Implement effective strategies to reduce hospital readmission rates.

Ensure that accurate records are kept of patient interventions.

Promote an organizational culture that values collaboration between different medical specialties.

Establish clear systems to ensure patient privacy and confidentiality.

Promote interprofessional learning between different disciplines within the medical field.

Conduct periodic reviews of institutional policies related to patient care.

Ensure a proactive approach to identifying and managing clinical risk is maintained.

Promote community initiatives that encourage healthy lifestyles among the population.

Implement specific programs to address the needs of vulnerable populations.

Promote clear communication about expectations and expected outcomes with patients.

Conduct research on common medical errors and their underlying causes.

Develop educational programs aimed at medical students and other medical science majors on patient safety.

Promote a holistic approach to treatment, considering the patient's physical, emotional, and social aspects.

Science and conscience are required to prevent negligence and recklessness.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

JLAS: conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, project administration, original draft, supervision.

EMQF: research, methodology, project management, writing, supervision.

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